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# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

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FRED SHELLEY, Editor

FRANCIS C. HABER, Associate Editor

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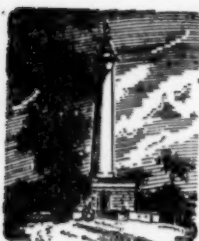
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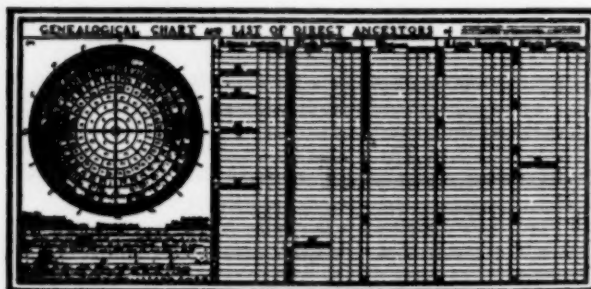
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# MARYLAND HISTORICAL MAGAZINE

*A Quarterly*

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## JOHN GRUBER AND HIS ALMANAC

By DIETER CUNZ

TALK to a man who grew up in Maryland, central Pennsylvania, Upstate New York, or West Virginia and mention the city of Hagerstown, and he will probably say: "That's the place where the almanac comes from, isn't it?" Ask him about John Gruber, and he will have an expression of embarrassed ignorance on his face: "I never heard of him. What did he do?" The famous *Hagerstown Almanack* has survived John Gruber by almost a century, but the memory of its founder has faded more and more. It was different a hundred years ago. In an obituary of John Gruber we read: "The Almanack has rendered the name of John Gruber a household word."

John Gruber came to Western Maryland in the wake of the first wave of German immigration that was channeled into the Middle Atlantic section during the 18th century. Unlike most other German immigrants, the Grubers were a family of some distinction, and they can be traced back to the time of the Reformation. The

line of male descent of the Grubers, as far as their names and birth dates are known to us were: <sup>1</sup>

1. Andreas Gruber, 1549
2. Ludovicus Gruber, 1574
3. Johannes Gruber, March 10, 1607
4. Philipp Hermann Gruber, at Marburg, April 6, 1635
5. Eberhard Ludwig Gruber, at Stuttgart, June 12, 1666

The son of the last mentioned, John Adam Gruber, the grandfather of the Hagerstown printer, was the immigrant ancestor. John Adam Gruber emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1726 and settled in Germantown. At the same time two other Grubers (Henry and Christian) entered the colony, yet there is no evidence that they were brothers or relatives of John Adam. John Adam Gruber (August 6, 1693-May 5, 1763) married Anne Elizabeth Stiefel. Their only son was John Eberhard Gruber who was born in Germantown, February 20, 1736. A physician and for some time Justice of the Peace, he spent the greater part of his life in Strasburg, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In his declining years he moved to his son's home in Hagerstown where he died on August 11, 1814. His marriage to Anna Christiana Pein (1738-1824) was blessed with eight children. Their eldest son was John Gruber, the printer.<sup>2</sup>

John Gruber was born in Strasburg, Pa., on October 31, 1768. At the age of 15 he started his apprenticeship in the shop of a well-known Philadelphia printer, Charles Cist. Since he was in

<sup>1</sup> A good deal of genealogical information was gathered from the 100th anniversary issue of the *Hagerstown Almanack* (1897) and from an article by Cyrus H. Eshelman, "John Gruber and the Hagerstown Almanac," published in *The Morning Call*, Allentown, Pennsylvania, December 3, 1938. C. H. Eshelman also compiled all available information on John Gruber's descendants which is preserved in an unpublished manuscript in the vertical files of the Maryland Room of the Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore.—Through correspondence with Dr. Kurt Stahr of the State Archives in Marburg, Germany, we were able to add a few additional data. The church register of the Lutheran congregation in Marburg indicates that Ludwig (Ludovicus) Gruber in the year 1632 moved from the town of Zella in the County of Ziegenhain to the City of Marburg. His son Johannes Gruber, married to Margarethe Juncker, was a tanner and tawer. Their second son was Philipp Herman Gruber: he was married to Maria Catharina Bachmann of Biedenkopf, Nassau. Their son Eberhard Ludwig Gruber was one of the leaders of a great revivalist movement in Southwestern Germany. See *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, (Tübingen, 1927/32), III, 298. *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipzig, 1896/1909), IX, 204. Christian Kolb, *Anfänge des Pietismus und Separatismus in Württemberg*, (Stuttgart, 1902).

<sup>2</sup> Following are the children of John Eberhard and Anna Christiana Gruber: John (1768), Daniel (1770), David (1772), Ludwig (1773), Charlotte (1776), Charles (1777), William and Elizabeth, twins (1780).

feeble health during his youth he went to the West Indies and at the age of 21 (1789) was engaged as a compositor of a French newspaper in Santo Domingo. However, the benefits of the salubrious insular climate were more than offset by the terror of the notorious uprisings which shook the island during these years. Thus, within a year Gruber returned home and for some time lived in Reading, Pa., where in 1793-94 he was co-editor of a German newspaper, the *Neue Unpartheyische Readinger Zeitung und Anzeigs-Nachrichten*.<sup>3</sup> Here he came into contact with General Daniel Hiester, who until 1796 lived in Berks County.<sup>4</sup> General Hiester urged him to move to Hagerstown and establish there a German newspaper. In June, 1795, the German settlers of Western Maryland were presented with the first issue of *Die Westliche Correspondenz und Hagerstauner Wochenschrift*, a weekly which from then on was published regularly for at least thirty years.<sup>5</sup> Politically speaking, John Gruber, like most other Germans, was in the Republican camp and he began immediately to beat the drum for Thomas Jefferson. General Samuel Ringgold,<sup>6</sup> who was very active in Maryland politics at that time, prevailed on him to add an English companion to his German weekly, again for the main

<sup>3</sup> See Clarence S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers 1690-1820*, (Worcester, Mass., 1947), II, 970.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Hiester (1747-1804), the son-in-law of Jonathan Hager, founder of Hagerstown, moved to Hagerstown in 1796 and represented the Western Maryland counties in the U. S. Congress from 1800 until his death in 1804. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, IX, 9-10.

<sup>5</sup> See Felix Reichmann, "German Printing in Maryland, A Check List, 1768-1950," *Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, Reports*, XXVII (1950), 27. We are greatly indebted to Dr. Reichman's thorough scholarship. No other state has such an excellent and comprehensive compilation of German imprints. Cf. also Brigham, *op. cit.*, I, 267. A. Rachel Minick, *History of Printing in Maryland, 1791-1800* (Columbia University Thesis, 1948), 110, 169, 182, 186-187, 190-197. Oswald Seidensticker, *The First Century of German Printing in America, 1728-1830* (Philadelphia, 1893), 141, 170. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Western Maryland* (Philadelphia, 1882), II, 1141. After 1814 the paper was published by Gruber & May. Earlier historians (Scharf, Seidensticker) mention a Gruber weekly "Deutsche Washington Correspondent" or "German Washington Correspondent" which evidently is an inaccurate way of referring to the *Westliche Correspondenz*. The earliest issue preserved is the one of September 28, 1796 (in the Berks County Historical Society, Reading, Pa.); the latest number known is dated December 30, 1825, 31st year, no. 27 (in the Library of Congress). Scattered issues are to be found in the Library of Pennsylvania State College and in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. If our readers know of the existence of additional copies we would appreciate the information.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Ringgold (1770-1829), a native of Washington County, was for several years a member of the Maryland State Senate and served in Congress from 1810 to 1815 and 1817 to 1821. See *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949* (1950), p. 1740, and E. R. Bevan, "Fountain Rock, The Ringgold Home in Washington County," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XLVII (1952), 23 f.

purpose of rallying votes behind the Jeffersonian banner. Thus, Gruber (as we know from indirect sources) started his *Sentinel of Liberty* which however soon turned out to be a failure and had to be discontinued because a competitor in Hagerstown was already publishing a similar paper for the Republican cause.<sup>7</sup> Like most other newspaper publishers, Gruber operated a job printing business and in his print shop trained a good number of young printers. Their names may be found in the histories of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania—Ambrose Henkel, Jacob Dietrich, Adam Glossbrenner, and Laurentz Wartmann.<sup>8</sup> In 1811 Gruber took his son-in-law, Daniel May (married to his daughter Rebecca) into his business; from 1814 to 1829 the company sailed under the flag of Gruber & May.<sup>9</sup> Aside from the newspaper a considerable number of book publications came from the Gruber press. We have a list of 38 titles of German books which in Gruber's lifetime were published by the firm, all between the years 1796 and 1831. Most of his German books have a religious flavor: the Heidelberg catechism, Luther's catechism, hymn books, minutes

<sup>7</sup> Until now all historians (not excluding Dieter Cunz in his *Maryland Germans*, p. 175) have somewhat carelessly accepted the existence of the *Sentinel of Liberty*, although there is only indirect and posthumous evidence of its publication. The only sources for the existence of the paper are the two obituaries of John Gruber, one published in the *Hagerstown Almanack* of 1859, the other in the *Hagerstown Herald of Freedom and Torch Light*, January 6, 1858. In the latter it is stated: "... to the encouragement and support of the paper, a Republican Feast was given by General (then Major) Ringgold and his political friends. But the enterprise was not sufficiently encouraged and was discontinued, about a year afterwards, the principles of the Republican party being fully sustained by Thomas Grieves, Esq. who had published an English paper in the county. . . ." We searched through the Grieves paper, the *Hagerstown Maryland Herald*, 1797-1804, yet we found no indication of the existence of the *Sentinel of Liberty*. We found three references to Gruber (August 20, 1801, April 7 and 14, 1802), which, however, did not mention the *Sentinel*. With all this we do not wish to say that the *Sentinel of Liberty* did not exist. In view of the fact that so many issues of the Western Maryland press have disappeared, it is not surprising that no copy can be found now. It is understandable that the *Maryland Herald*, a competitive paper, never mentioned it in order not to advertise it. If the *Sentinel* was published, it must have been before 1810, i. e. before Samuel Ringgold became a general. For ascertaining some of these facts the author is indebted to Mr. Fred Shelley, Dr. Clarence S. Brigham, and Miss A. Rachel Minick.

<sup>8</sup> We owe thanks to Mr. Klaus G. Wust for informing us about the existence of Henkel papers which contain material on John Gruber. Duke University has a collection of Solomon Henkel papers (Solomon, the brother of Ambrose Henkel), 105 items from the years 1801-1860. Mrs. H. I. Tusing of New Market, Virginia, has collected and preserved a collection of several hundred Henkel items (letters, books, etc.). Unfortunately we could not include this material in the present article.

<sup>9</sup> We do not know exactly when and why Daniel May left Hagerstown, but we know that in 1840 he began publishing a newspaper in York, Pennsylvania, the *Republican Herald*.

of a Lutheran conference in Virginia, of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, the constitution of the Theological Seminary of Gettysburg, a few sermons and addresses. There are a few collections of Christian stories and a primer for children. In 1799 he published a German version of the Constitution of the United States.<sup>10</sup> We do not know how many English books and pamphlets he may have printed, but we may safely assume that he was as firmly established in English as in German printing. In fact, in the course of his life he had to shift more and more from German to English. The original German settlers of Western Maryland who had immigrated between 1730 and 1775 retained their German identity rather strongly for the first and second generations. Then, between 1820 and 1840, many indications point to the fact that their Americanization made rapid progress. The history of the Gruber publications bears this out. We have no German book publication from his print shop after 1831. Beginning in 1822 he added an English edition to his German almanac and around 1830 he must have discontinued publication of his German weekly *Die Westliche Correspondenz*.

John Gruber's fame rests not on his book publications nor on his weekly papers. His great reputation inside and outside of Maryland was established through his yearly almanac which was first published in 1797 and has since appeared in an unbroken series to the present day. It began as a German calendar called *Der neue nord-americanische Stadt-und Land Calender auf das Jahr 1797*; in 1815 the name was changed to *Volksfreund und Hägerstauner Calender*. Under this title the German edition was published continuously until 1917.<sup>11</sup> For the year 1822 Gruber published his almanac in a German and an English version, the English under the title *The Hagerstown Town and Country Almanack* which outlasted its older German brother and is still alive today.<sup>12</sup> It is

<sup>10</sup> For a complete list of Gruber's book publications in German see Reichmann, items 40, 47, 59, 60, 72, 80, 88, 89, 100, 102, 105, 106, 107, 118, 124, 126, 140, 141, 143, 162, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 193, 194, 195, 196, 204, 205, 213, 220, 221, 229, 232, 233, 239.

<sup>11</sup> See Reichmann, items 41, 48, 52, 58, 67, 73, 76, 81, 84, 90, 96, 101, 108, 114, 119, 125, 130, 136, 144, 152, 163, 174, 187, 197, 201, 206, 209, 214, 216, 222, 225, 230, 234, 237, 240, 243, 246, 253, 258, 263, 272, 278, 281, 285, 290, 294, 299, 307, 309, 311, 314, 319, 324, 334, 340, 347, 352, 357, 363, 368, 374, 382. These are the editions which were published in Gruber's lifetime. The last issue prepared by John Gruber was the calendar for 1858, published late in 1857.

<sup>12</sup> The *Almanack* is preserved in some rather extensive collections in private and public libraries. The earliest copy in existence is the second edition of the almanac



the second oldest almanac in the country still published—second only to the *Old Farmer's Almanac* (Boston, 1792).

The principal item of the almanac was the calendar table for the various months. To this were added some standing features such as a multiplication table from two times two up to 25 times 25; figures on the size, distance, revolutions etc. of the earth, moon and sun; mileage from Hagerstown to all major cities roughly within the triangle Boston-Pittsburg-Charleston; court calendars for Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia; astronomical data and weather forecasts.

All this was interspersed with brief articles which must have had a broad educational effect on a rural population that was not exposed yet to the modern avalanche of dailies, magazines, radio, and television. These bits of prose gave to the *Hagerstown Almanack* its characteristic and unmistakable profile and they reflect undoubtedly also the character of its founder and editor. In his later years John Gruber liked to recall the fact that in his youth he attended the funeral of Benjamin Franklin, "the brother printer." Gruber's obituary, published in the 1859 edition, mentions that his almanac "bears a striking analogy . . . to that published by Doctor Franklin, . . . which embalmed so much of the proverbial wisdom of that distinguished patriot and philosopher." Indeed, anyone who reads these simple reflections, essays and exhortations of the *Hagerstown Almanack* will immediately be reminded of the sage of Philadelphia. John Gruber was for the German farmer of the Potomac region what Benjamin Franklin was for the country at large.

Gruber offered to his readers a simple, practical, homespun wisdom. "Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can alienate, no despotism can enslave. At home a friend, abroad an introduction, in solitude a solace, in society an ornament. It chastens vice, it guides virtue, it gives at once grace and government to the genius."<sup>18</sup>—"Cook-

in German (1798), in the Library Company of Philadelphia. One of the best collections is held by a descendant of John Gruber, Mr. Arthur D. Gans (4007 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore), who has a complete set from 1841 to the present and of earlier issues those of 1801, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1816, 1817, 1820, 1822. Other good collections are in the Enoch Pratt Library, the Maryland Historical Society, the Library of Congress, the Peabody Institute, the Hagerstown Public Library and the Gruber Almanack Company (9 N. Potomac Street, Hagerstown).

<sup>18</sup> The maxims of the *Almanack* did by no means always grow in Gruber's own garden. Very often he lifted them from other publications without indicating their



ing is an art. It is a big job. It takes more loftiness of character to do it well than it does to conduct a government or convert the heathen—which is probably the reason so many women prefer to engage in the last two occupations.”—“You know how a fine-looking horse or cow appears with one of its eyes missing? Well, that’s just about the way a farmyard looks without a flowerbed.”—On every page we find good and useful advice: “Never work the garden when the soil is wet.”—“The manure pile is the farmer’s bank.”—“The hand is the best hoe for weeding onions.”—“Keep the poultry house clean and neat, and your efforts will be amply rewarded by the egg basket and by kind words from your friends.” In almost every issue there are headings such as “The Poultry Yard,” “The Busy Bee,” “Household Recipes,” “For the Housewife,” “Farm and Garden,” “Making Farming Profitable,” “What should be planted this month.” Constantly recurring are also medical and veterinarian advice, exhortations to hygiene, cleanliness, frequent changes of clothing, sleeping without bed curtains, plenty of fresh air etc. He tries to explain to his readers some basic facts of biology and natural science: “The Inward Parts of the Human Body,” followed soon by the “External parts of the Human Body.” There are a few sketches on botany, zoology and geography. These geographical excursions were often coordinated with current political events: thus in 1847 and 1851 we find articles on “The Oregon Territory,” in 1848 on “Mexico,” and in 1847 on “California.” We know it will cause grief to modern Californians if we tell them that Gruber at the first mentioning of the word California decided to add a helpful (though erroneous) footnote: “California, a Peninsula of North America, in the Pacific Ocean, separated from the west coast of North America by the Vermilion sea, or the gulf of California.”

One of Gruber’s pet ideas seems to have been the promotion of wine-making. He advocated raising of grapes not only because it would add a new color to the agricultural palette of his region but also because he hoped that an innocuous drink like wine would replace the harmful whisky. Editorials against drunkenness, occurring again and again, are symptomatic of Gruber’s temperate attitude, yet they also indicate that alcoholic leanings were not

origin. For the above mentioned item on education we were able to establish the source: Joseph Addison’s *Spectator* of November 6, 1711. The general complexion of Gruber’s publication reminds us very often of the “Moral Weeklies” of the 18th century.

completely unknown among the sturdy and God-fearing German farmers of Western Maryland. One of the earliest issues, the almanac of 1807, carried an "Ermahnung zum Weinbau" in which he advocated growth of the "herrliche Wein, welcher die Menschen gesund, stark, fröhlich und fleissig hält; dahingegen der stinkigte Whisky den Körper und die Seele schwächt."<sup>14</sup> He explained that the best European wine countries were situated between the 35th and 50th degrees, which seemed to him a good reason to expect a drinkable wine from the hills along the Potomac and the Shenandoah. After 1822 he extolled the blessings of wine-growing in both languages:

By cultivating the vine you will promote your own interest, promote temperance, and banish the whiskey still and brandy bottle, for who would drink either, if a good, wholesome and cheap wine was to be had. . . . Cultivate the grape and promote temperance—or distill whiskey and make drunkards [1839].

These tirades against heavy drinking show that Gruber was concerned not only with the beehive, poultry yard and manure pile of his farmers but also with their morals and manners. A few headlines of his editorials may illustrate this: "Honoring Parents," "Suggestions to the Young," "Chapter on Quarreling," "Pay your Debts" and many other pieces in this vein. A little essay "The Wife" praises the blessings of a "prudent and industrious wife," a timeless bit of prose, today as good as it was in June, 1848. A little sermon of 1854 classifies people into three ascending groups of moral value: "Live—Let Live—Help Live," and gives the palm to the last category as the "truly benevolent men." Gruber had very strong religious convictions, but he wanted to see practical results of religion. "Religion that does not make a man honest, is good for nothing." The wonders of nature showed to him more vividly than anything else the power of the Lord. The little article on the functionings of the human body closed with an admonition to be thankful to the Almighty. Gruber was in complete harmony with God, with nature, with the world at large and with his immediate surroundings. "Everything in nature tends to the good of mankind. . . . Thousands of objects unite to nourish, clothe and furnish thee with innumerable com-

<sup>14</sup> " . . . the magnificent wine which keeps men healthy, strong, happy and industrious, whereas the stinking whisky weakens body and soul."

forts and conveniences . . . Thou canst not be too grateful to thy Creator for the manifold benefits allotted to thee" (1846).

The *Hagerstown Almanack* reflecting so clearly the mentality of its founder and editor is interesting not only for what it contains but also for what is missing in its columns. Conspicuous is the complete lack of interest in Germany. After 1850 the German-Americans, even in the second and third generation, were deeply aroused by political events in the German Reich. John Gruber's almanac does not reveal a trace of sentimental attachment to the country from which his grandfather had emigrated. Once the calendar published a little article on a German village in Ohio, Zoar, founded by German sectarians. Germany itself never appeared in the columns of the almanac. There was nothing like divided or double loyalty in Gruber's heart. At almost regular intervals the almanac contained patriotic anecdotes from the American Revolution, about George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. In the calendar of 1826, after having spoken of the development and progress of the United States, Gruber concluded:

If one calmly meditates on the greatness, wealth and strength our country has reached within the short time of some forty years and reflects what freedom we enjoy in civic affairs and matters of the conscience, in contrast to all other nations on the face of the globe, and how undisturbed everyone, like members of a large family, can attend to his religious duties according to his own choice under the protection of a government chosen by the people, one cannot help being amazed and must cry from the depth of a deeply touched and grateful heart: Truly, that is the work of the Lord.<sup>15</sup>

An editorial "The Debt of England" (1838) is symptomatic of his political sentiment: "It should cause the bosom of every American to swell with pride at the contrast between England and the United States. While the former is burdened with an enormous debt, the latter has a surplus revenue of \$40,000,000 in the public treasury." Other editorials repeatedly praised the blessings of the American democratic system. In domestic politics he was (as the obituary said) "a disciple of the Jefferson school of republicanism."

The literary quality of the stories and narratives in the columns of the almanac is rather low. Most of them have a strong moral-

<sup>15</sup> For a description of the almanac see also Augustus J. Pahl, "The Hagerstown Almanac, A Venerable Institution," *American German Review*, VIII (1942), v, 7-9.

izing and religious tendency. Modern slang would probably label them as "sob-stories." To say that there were no great names of German or English literature in the fiction section of the calendar, would be beside the point, for there were no names at all. Gruber had no qualms about putting into his almanac whatever he pleased without giving credit to the author. Only once we discovered a piece well known in German literature: "Der Wilde" by J. G. Seume (1763-1810).<sup>16</sup>

The one feature which more than anything else accounts for the fame of the almanac was its weather forecasts. Through a century and a half the rural subscribers of the almanac have stubbornly insisted on the assertion that the weather forecasts were dependable and correct, although a simple checkup on its predictions should make the most loyal follower doubtful. The weather calculations of the almanac must be compiled as much as eighteen months ahead of time.<sup>17</sup> Meteorologists have for a long time questioned the scientific soundness of such weather forecasts. More than fifty years ago, Oliver L. Fassig had the following to say on the problem:

The weather conjectures of the Hagerstown Almanac are apparently based upon a supposed influence of the moon. That the moon has a direct influence in bringing about weather changes is so firmly implanted in the popular mind, and to a large extent also in the scientific mind, that it will probably never be completely eradicated. How this influence is brought about has never been stated to the satisfaction of the man of science.<sup>18</sup>

Since we were curious to find out how present day meteorology looked upon the subject we communicated with the Weather Bureau of the United States Department of Commerce. We quote from the reply which we received:

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<sup>16</sup> The topic of the poem, the noble savage, has a long tradition in European literatures. Especially during the 18th century it exerted a strong fascination on many poets who wanted to contrast the degeneracy of the civilized with the nobility of the primitive. Seume's poem, published in the *Sämliche Werke* (Leipzig, 1853), VII, 72-75, was later included in many anthologies of German poetry. The only English translation ("The Indian") may be found in Alfred Baskerville, *The Poetry of Germany* (Philadelphia, 1886), pp. 145-148. Gruber transposed the poem into a prose narrative, again without indicating source and author.

<sup>17</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the methods of the Hagerstown weather service cf. the above mentioned article by A. J. Prah in the *American German Review*. See also F. J. Walz, "Fake Weather Forecasts," *Popular Science Monthly*, XLVII (1905), 503-513.

<sup>18</sup> Oliver L. Fassig, "A Sketch of the Progress of Meteorology in Maryland and Delaware," in *Maryland Weather Service* (Baltimore, 1899), edited by W. Bullock Clark and others, Vol. I, p. 347.

In regard to the influence of the moon, no significant effect on the weather has been demonstrated. As evidence of this fact, the vast majority of countries in the world now have a national weather service and none of them takes the moon into consideration in making predictions. . . . In 1797 . . . there were very few weather records in the United States. In fact, no systematic records were begun at a network of observing posts in this country until 1819. Until these records began to accumulate, the principal source of information on climate and the seasonal changes in the weather was one or more of the almanacs published at that time. . . . No national meteorological service in the world today attempts to predict in any detail the weather day by day for more than two or three days ahead. The Weather Bureau makes predictions . . . for periods of five days ahead but even in these predictions the day-by-day details are seldom indicated beyond the third day. . . . The general character of the weather as an average (not in day-by-day detail) is given in an outlook for 30 days ahead but not for a year in advance.<sup>19</sup>

Should we add to this that the forecasts were often formulated in a flexible way which would not preclude claiming credit, no matter what the weather would be? Quite often the prediction said "Variable," "Changeable," "Moderate," "Unsettled," which left many possibilities open. The most spectacular story about the accuracy of the almanac's weather predictions is based on inaccurate premises, namely the somewhat startling forecast of snow for the Fourth of July.<sup>20</sup> However, we do not want to quibble about minor details. The authority of the *Almanack* has not been shaken by the scepticism of our days. "In Baltimore the court of highest appeal on weather issues is the *Hagerstown Almanack*," said Francis Beirne recently with a twinkle in his eyes.<sup>21</sup> Since repeated waves of rationalistic criticism could not shake the convictions of loyal followers in town and country we

<sup>19</sup> The author would like to express his appreciation to Mr. John H. Eberly of the U. S. Weather Bureau in Washington, D. C. This information was received in a letter of January 8, 1952.

<sup>20</sup> Numerous newspaper articles have dealt with the *Almanack*. See *Evening Sun*, March 2, 1927; *Sun*, August 25, 1940; *Evening Sun*, July 23, 1945; *Sun*, December 19, 1948; to mention only a few. Again and again these newspaper stories dwell upon the perplexing prediction of the *Almanack* for July 4, 1874, when (according to the feature writers) Hagerstown predicted snow,—and (so they say) "it did snow." What are the facts? The *Baltimore Sun* of July 3, 1874 predicted for the following day "Cloudy and rain." The issue of the fifth of July reveals that on the preceding day the city suffered from the usual Maryland summer humidity. The records of the U. S. Weather Bureau show a maximum temperature of 92 and a minimum of 67, uncomfortably high for snow flakes. We finally consulted the Hagerstown *Almanack* about this miraculous snow-prediction: the almanack-forecast for July 4, 1874 says "FAIR." Thus, the story does not reflect on the almanac but on the men who wrote about it.

<sup>21</sup> Francis F. Beirne, *The Amiable Baltimoreans* (New York, 1951), p. 247.



do not expect that the doubtful wrinkling of our forehead will bring about a change. Not only the farmers swore by the Hagerstown weather predictions. William T. Hamilton, a native of Hagerstown who was Governor of Maryland from 1880 to 1884, supposedly consulted the almanac of his home town before settling the date of a public hanging, lest the popular event be marred by rain. Who still asks whether or not the rope some times did not get wet after all? The staunch belief in the Hagerstown weather predictions cannot be approached with analytical criticism. It belongs in the lofty realm of legend and faith, and to argue about it in Western Maryland is just as dangerous as to doubt the authenticity of the Barbara Fritchie story.

In 1836 the almanac added to its columns an artistic touch which it retained to the present time: the woodcuts. The pictures reflect the agricultural pursuits of the readers. The woodcut of the month shows the chores which the farmer has to perform in this particular season of the year: flailing grain in January; chopping wood in February; building fences in March; plowing in April; shearing sheep in May; cutting grass in June; mowing wheat in July; hauling out manure in August; sowing grain in September; making cider in October; husking corn in November; building a trough in December. A few of these pictures changed in the course of time (December in later editions shows a family gathered around the fire place), but most of them have survived a century and still show the slightly crude, naive and touching directness of the original cuts.

We may well assume that during Gruber's lifetime the greater part of the text for the almanac was written by the founder and publisher himself. However, he had a few helpers. For twelve years Dr. Christian Börstler, a well known German physician in Washington County, contributed to the calendar. Born in the Palatinate, Börstler had emigrated to Maryland in 1784 and settled in Funkstown, a few miles south of Hagerstown—"a gentleman of liberal education and high standing in county and state," said the local historian.<sup>22</sup> Börstler's indefatigable efforts, his work as a physician and veterinarian has never been adequately described. His diaries, never translated into English, contain a

<sup>22</sup> T. J. C. Williams, *History of Washington County, Maryland* (Hagerstown, 1906), I, 245.



great deal of material on the social conditions among the farmers in the Maryland back counties.<sup>23</sup>

Around 1855 old age compelled Gruber to withdraw gradually from business, although he still had his hand in the preparation of the 1858 almanac which was published after his death. In his last years he appointed William Stewart of Indianapolis to take care of his business transactions in the Midwestern states, and Thomas R. Robertson in the Atlantic states.<sup>24</sup> He died on December 29, 1857, and was buried in the old Zion Reformed cemetery in Hagerstown.

Obituaries should be taken with a grain of salt. Still, we do not hesitate to quote from the necrology which we found in the 1859 edition of the almanac. What was said there only confirms the impression gained from a perusal of the sixty volumes of the calendar which in every sense of the word bear Gruber's imprint. "Through a long life, far more than the ordinary allotment, Mr. Gruber was distinguished by most marked and uniform quietude and equanimity of temper. Industrious and attentive to his business and concerns, he was strictly careful never to meddle with the business or character of others. He was never known to speak ill of any human being. He had a heart and a hand for every one in affliction and distress, that came within the range of his charity; but so quiet and unostentatious were his deeds of benevolence that none but the relieved and his God knew them. Wealth and worldly show had no charms for him. . . . No one ever doubted the sincerity and integrity of John Gruber. His word was as good as his bond. . . . To him age listened with respect and admiration, and youth rose up and called him blessed." There is no doubt that a hundred years ago John Gruber was one of the most respected and most beloved citizens in the Western part of the state.

If Gruber had a son he must have died early, since we know nothing of any male descendants. We do know, however, the names and birthdays of his six daughters, recorded in the church-book of the German Reformed Church of Hagerstown:

1. Charlotte Gruber, September 4, 1795
2. Rebecca Gruber, December 28, 1796
3. Theresia Gruber, July 17, 1799
4. Mathilda Gruber, June 4, 1801

<sup>23</sup> The German original of his diaries was published fifty years ago in *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter* (Chicago, 1901/03), Vol. I, i, 17-22, iii, 50-57, iv, 85-86; Vol. II, i, 56-58, ii, 29-32, iii, 49-51, iv, 49-55; Vol. III, ii, 40-44.

<sup>24</sup> See Minick, *op. cit.*, 196.

5. Louisa Margaretha Gruber, 14, 1807

6. Fredericka Christiana Gruber, August 15, 1814

Through these daughters various families (May, Schwartz, Gans, Fisher, Conn) can trace their ancestry back to the old printer.<sup>25</sup>

John Gruber died, but his almanac lived on. For several decades it was in the hands of the descendants of Daniel May; for some time it was published by the *Hagerstown Herald-Mail*; after 1920 it was owned by the Hagerstown Bookbinding and Printing Company; and in 1935 it came into the possession of the Gruber Almanack Company, under the management of Mr. Frank S. Leiter. Thus the venerable old almanac has stubbornly survived all changes in ownership and operation. According to its editor, the present circulation is near 200,000. It has subscribers all over the United States and Canada; however, it is mostly read within a 100 miles radius around Hagerstown. The sales agencies, given on the cover of the 1952 issue, are probably indicative of its heaviest distribution: Hagerstown, Frederick, Baltimore, Cumberland, in Maryland; Philadelphia, Uniontown, Pittsburgh, Gettysburg, in Pennsylvania; Culpeper, Winchester, Harrisonburg, Staunton, Richmond, in Virginia; Washington, D. C.

Every year in December piles of the thin white booklet with the colored binding strip appear in the drugstores in the towns and cities of the Shenandoah-Potomac-Susquehanna region. Gone are the bits of homespun wisdom and the comforting little sermons of the founder. Yet, thousands of people still look up the weather predictions of the almanac before they take a trip or plant their gardens. And thousands of others may just buy it because it belongs to the household and because their father and grandfather had bought it. On the cover which deliberately clings to its nineteenth century ornaments we still see a serene looking woman, a symbol of Liberty, surrounded by various paraphernalia of agriculture and commerce. On top, a grim old-fashioned American eagle spreads its wings, carrying a band with the traditional inscription "By Industry We Thrive." At the bottom of the title page we still read (and in our affection for the almanac we do not mind that this has not been correct now for almost one hundred years): "Printed by John Gruber."

<sup>25</sup> Most of this genealogical material was collected by Cyrus H. Eshelman. Charlotte (II, Second generation) married Francis Philip Schwartz. Their daughter, Margaret Catherine Schwartz (III) married the Rev. Daniel Gans. Their son was Arthur Lisle Gans (IV); his son Arthur Daniel Gans (V) is the collector of Gruber books and almanacs, mentioned in footnote 10.

## AN ENGLISHMAN IN THE FRENCH ARMY IN AMERICA, 1755

Edited by JAMES HIGH

**A**LTHOUGH the study of Western Maryland does not receive the emphasis that it deserves, the region was actually very important in the great struggle that took place between 1713 and 1783: first by the British and Americans to eliminate the French, then by the Americans to eliminate the British, not to mention the running fight between whites and Indians throughout the century.

The geographic fact alone of Maryland's strategic situation is significant. Her western tip extends like a spear aimed at the heart of the Ohio Valley—prize of empire in 1754 and victor's spoil in 1763. The strategic significance of Cumberland, Maryland, during the penetration of the Appalachian barrier is undeniable. Although Braddock's ill-starred exploit has become known to every schoolboy, it is often forgotten that he made his base at Fort Cumberland and that it was Western Maryland's own men who showed him the way over the mountains. The National Road and the United Air Lines route follow closely the way taken from east to west by the vanguard of American westward expansion.

Colorful and important figures were in plenty west of Frederick Town after the middle of the century. They are only less brilliant than the stars of the American Revolution who dominate the pages of colonial history. Thomas Cresap, Barney Curran, Christopher Gist, Andrew Montour, Teedyuscung, Sir John St. Clair, Horatio Sharpe, Daniel Dulany, Thomas Ringgold, Reverend Thomas Bacon—and hosts of others played out their roles with distinction in Western Maryland in the drama of national birth.

As the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Cumberland approaches, it seems fitting to call some attention to one way in which Western Maryland was significant in the American process of breaking out of the restricted area along the waterways of the eastern seaboard.

The Ohio Company of Virginia first pointed up the strategic position of Cumberland by building some warehouses there in 1749. The intention then was to use it as a base for trade westward with the Indians. Its military usefulness became apparent to Colonel Sharpe in 1754, when he first became governor of Maryland and while he was commander-in-chief of the British forces against France in the New World. The following document sharply illustrated Cumberland's importance to the French as viewed from the western side of the mountains as a means of access to the "back side" of the English colonies.

In 1753 Governor Robert Dinwiddie, whatever his motives might have been, interested himself in the Ohio Valley, and made possible the circumstances that led Major George Washington's Virginia troops to fire the "shot heard 'round the world.'" <sup>1</sup> The Earl of Holderness sent out his letter warning the American governors that "regular European troops" were in league with the western Indians with the purpose of encroaching on the "Limits of his Majesties Dominions." <sup>2</sup> The map that Dinwiddie sent to the Board of Trade, January 29, 1754, clearly indicates what its maker, Christopher Gist, thought was an implicit threat: French aggression southward and eastward from the Great Lakes. <sup>3</sup> Most probably the focus of the attack would be Western Maryland. The result of these activities was that young Washington was sent out through what is now Western Pennsylvania to warn the French away from the Ohio. By the middle of 1754 Britain and France were irrevocably committed to a war in North America to determine which nation would succeed in dominating the continent. <sup>4</sup>

It took two years and a succession of four British commanders in the field, before Great Britain declared open hostility and sent over the Earl of Loudoun to wage serious warfare against the

<sup>1</sup> Louis Knott Koontz, *Robert Dinwiddie* (Glendale, Calif., 1941), p. 237 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Holderness to Sharpe, August 28, 1753, *Archives of Maryland*, VI, 3-4. Robert D'Arcy, 4th Earl of Holderness, was Secretary of State (1751-1761). Horatio Sharpe, (1718-1790) was Governor of Maryland (1753-1769), and succeeded Governor Dinwiddie as commander-in-chief of the British forces in America (1754-1755). He was relieved by General Edward Braddock.

<sup>3</sup> Map of French positions on the Lakes and down the Ohio, 1754, Public Record Office, Maps and Plans 118:7 (Library of Congress Transcripts).

<sup>4</sup> Adam Stephen, "Narrative of what has passed upon the River Ohio, August, 1753, to July, 1754," British Museum, Additional Manuscripts, 15874:208 (Library of Congress Transcripts). See Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The Great War for the Empire* (7 vols. to date, Caldwell, Idaho and New York, 1932-1950), vols. VI and VII, *The Years of Defeat, 1754-1757* and *The Victorious Years, 1758-1763*. This is an admirable and comprehensive work.

French.<sup>5</sup> Two more years passed; three more commanders marked up failures for English arms before Brigadier General John Forbes, Major General James Wolfe, and Sir Jeffery Amherst finally swept the power of the King of France from America forever.

"A Journal description of some of the French Forts, had from Thomas Forbes, lately a Private Soldier in the King of France's Service, January, 1755," is a long forgotten document which reposes in the Public Record Office in London.<sup>6</sup> Such a journal reminds one of some of the stories heard by interrogators of Japanese prisoners in the Pacific during World War II. The "other side of the picture": a description in one's own language of the enemy's positions in a war is usually startling. An enemy is only partly seen in combat; he is imagined as more formidable than he is. When he is suddenly revealed as human, as possessing only the same physical attributes as other men, he becomes a little pitiable.

In the 20th century or in the 18th, it is rare to have the opportunity to observe the thinking and activities of an opposing military force. It often makes war seem doubly futile. In the deposition of Thomas Forbes, an Englishman who spent about a year in the French army, such a chance is offered.

This statement by Forbes illustrates some of the aspects of the brewing difficulties that presaged the mighty struggle between the titans of empire in the 18th century. It shows the strategic usefulness of nature's great highway from Quebec "down country" to Montreal, thence "in Batteaus & canoes" to Niagara, across Lake Erie to Presqu' isle, and then to the "Head of Buffaloe River," flowing into the Ohio drainage southward. The current would carry supplies and men to Fort Duquesne. It demonstrates, on the other hand, the basic weakness of the French attack on the English colonies from the west. A force of sufficient strength to strike from the passes of the remote Appalachians had to go the tortuous distance with their supplies, no more than two or three men to a boat. The journey was hazardous and expensive. French-

<sup>5</sup> James High, "The Earl of Loudoun and Horatio Sharpe, 1757 and 1758," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XLV (March, 1950), 14-32.

<sup>6</sup> A Journal description of some of the French Forts had from Thomas Forbes, lately a Private Soldier in the King of France's Service, January, 1755, Public Record Office, Colonial Office Papers 5/721: 135 ff. (Library of Congress Transcripts).



men as individuals had little to gain by the experience and their lives to lose if any hitch took place.

At the time of Washington's trip to the Ohio country when he attacked Jumonville's <sup>7</sup> force, killing the commander, and was in turn attacked by the French and forced to retreat, Thomas Forbes wrote concerning the first act in the unfolding drama. He said that there were about 1,400 men at the site of the newly constructed Fort Duquesne, "Seven Hundred of whom were ordered out . . . to attack M<sup>r</sup> Washington," under the command of Captain Mercier.<sup>8</sup> Washington's actual surrender was made to the dead Frenchman's brother, making the defeat doubly bitter. Washington unwittingly set his name under the word "assassination" when he signed the "Capitulation accordie par M. de Villiers . . . à celui des troupes angloises actuellement dans le Fort de Necessité," on July 3, 1754.<sup>9</sup>

It was very hard for the French to maintain a large force in the rear of the English coastal positions, and just a year later it was accurately reported that only three or four hundred French and Indians remained at Fort Duquesne. The temptation to desert was strong, and the threat, constantly offered, of hostility from the native tribesmen, made civilization more attractive than the rigors of backwoods campaigning. As an example, Michael La Chauvergne, commanding thirty-three Indians and French-Canadians on a raid across the Susquehanna from Fort Machault, became lost after his followers had melted into the forest one at a time, and after he had wandered in the wilderness alone for seven days finally surrendered at "Fort Henry" in order to avoid starvation. He was happy to abandon the banner of Louis XV.<sup>10</sup>

The British had no way of knowing these things except as chance might turn up a La Chauvergne or a Forbes. The best of military intelligence is never adequate, and in the eighteenth century it was, to say the least, sketchy.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville (d. May 28, 1754).

<sup>8</sup> "Chevalier Le Mercier, captain of the Bombardier gunners, commandant of the Canadian artillery" was sent by Captain Contrecoeur, April 16, 1754, to warn the British at the Monongahela to leave the lands of the "king, my master," Public Record Office, Colonial Office Papers 5/14:389 (Library of Congress Transcripts).

<sup>9</sup> Narrative of what has passed on the River Ohio [1754], British Museum, Additional Manuscripts, 35478:130 (Library of Congress Transcripts).

<sup>10</sup> Examination of Michael La Chauvergne by Lieutenant Colonel Conrad Weiser and others, Pennsylvania, 1757, Public Record Office, Gifts and Deposits, Bundle 95 (Library of Congress Transcripts).



Who Thomas Forbes was, other than a "Private Soldier in the King of France's Service," is unknown. A soldier of fortune is, at best, a shadowy figure. Tiring of the life of the *coureur de bois*, he told his questioners in 1755, that "October last I had an opportunity of relieving myself and retiring, . . ." He retired to Fort Cumberland on the British side of the mountains. In December, 1754, he placed himself in the hands of the Virginia and Maryland troops stationed in western Maryland when Lieutenant Colonel Horatio Sharpe was commander-in-chief of the British forces. At that time the French threat from the north and their strength in Louisiana were unknown and greatly feared quantities to the English settlers east of the Appalachian Mountains. Any information that they could acquire from the enemy was eagerly received.

A Journal description of some of the French Forts had from Thomas Forbes, lately a Private Soldier in the King of France's Service.<sup>11</sup>

About a Year & [a] half ago I, with 120 Private Soldiers & our Officers, embarked in Old France for Canada.

Our Vessel was a Frigate of 40 Guns, and another Frigate of 30 Guns sailed at the same time with a Company of Soldiers to relieve the Garrison at the Mouth of the Mississippi.

After a short Voyage we disembarked at Quebeck where we were permitted to stay 3 Weeks to refresh ourselves.

The regular Troops in that City did not exceed 300, but I was told there were many Parties & Detachments quartered up & down the Country all 'round the Place.

Being joined by a Company of 50 Men from that Garrison, we went in Batteaus to Montreal under the Command of Lieu<sup>t</sup> Carqueville, & there we spent the last winter.

At our Arrival there was a Company of 50 Men in the City where [we] were quartered, so that in all we made 220 exclusive of Officers.

Very early in the Spring we were joined by near 400 more, who were drafted out of the several Companies that garrisoned the Forts, & were posted on the Frontiers of Canada.

Easter Tuesday we embarked to the Number of 600, or 700, in about 300 Batteaus & Canoes (not Barken) & took with us a large Quantity of Barrell'd Pork & Meal in Baggs; the Baggs weighed 60<sup>lb</sup> or 70<sup>lb</sup> each, & I believe there might have been 1500 of them; how many of the Pork there were I never heard, nor could I guess, but I believe the Canoes that were not laden with Flour carried 5 or 6 Barrells at least, each of them, & the Batteaus received 18 or 20.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, Public Record Office, Colonial Office Papers 5/721: 135 (Library of Congress Transcripts).

We were three Weeks going from Montreal to Lake Ontario, keeping the Shore close on board, because of the rapidity of the Stream, & at Night we went ashore; excepting a few that were left with the Canoes that were fastened to Stakes or Trees on the shore.

Then we had our Biscuit, which was laid in for the Voyage, delivered to us, with 1<sup>lb</sup> of Pork to each, & kindling large Fires, we cooked our Provisions for next Day, & slept 'round the Fires, each of us being provided with a Blanket.

We kept along the South East shore of Ontario Lake & passed so near to the English Fort Called . . . Oswego that we could talk to the Centinels.

When we came to the Fort at the Falls of Niagara we landed all our Provisions, in which Service the Garrison at the Fort assisted & carried them on Sleds that were there at the Fort to a little Log House called le petit Fort de Niagara, three Leagues beyond Niagara Fort, where we put them aboard other Batteaus & Canoes that were there ready to receive them.

At our Arrival at Niagara, there were at that Fort 25 private Men, commanded by Lieu<sup>t</sup> de la Parrie, but M. Contracure<sup>12</sup> was also then in the Fort, & had the chief Command; there was also a Serjeant's Guard at the little Fort.

The Fort at Niagara is no more than an Eminence surrounded with Stockadoes or Palisades, which stand about 14 Feet above the Ground very close together, & are united or fastened together by three Pieces of long Scantling that it put transversely on the Inside at the Distance of three Feet or so from each other. These Stockadoes inclose an Area near 300 Paces square on which is built an House for the Commandant, Barracks for the Men, & a Smith's shop; it is not rendered defensible by any outwork or even a Ditch, & there are not mounted in it more than four Swivel Guns.

As soon as we had put our Provisions on board at the little Fort that I mentioned, we proceeded to Lake Erie with Capt<sup>n</sup> Contracure, who had himself now taken the Command of all the Troops in those Canoes. We kept along the Eastern Coast of this Lake to Fort Prisquille<sup>13</sup> which, I apprehend, is about 50 Leagues<sup>14</sup> from Niagara; this Fort is situated on a little rising Ground at a very small Distance from the Water of Lake Erie; is rather larger than that of Niagara, but has likewise no Bastions or Outworks of any Sort. Tis a Square Area inclosed with Logs about 12 feet high, the Logs being squared & laid on each other, & not more than 16 or 18 inches thick. Capt: Darpontine commanded in this Fort, & his Garrison was Thirty Private Men.

We were 8 days employed in unloading our Canoes here & carrying the Provisions to Fort Boeff<sup>15</sup> which is built about 6 Leagues from Fort Prisquille at the Head of Buffaloe River.

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<sup>12</sup> Pierre Claude Pécaudy, Sieur de Contrecoeur (1706-1775), great soldier of New France. He accompanied Céleron de Bienville on the Ohio expedition of 1749.

<sup>13</sup> Fort Presqu'isle is the present town of Erie, Pennsylvania.

<sup>14</sup> League means here about three miles.

<sup>15</sup> Fort Le Boeuf is the present town of Waterford, Pennsylvania.

This Fort was composed of four Houses built by way of Bastions, & the intermediate Space stockadoed. Lt St Blain was posted here with 20 Men; here we found three large Batteaus & between 200 or 300 Canoes which we freighted with Provisions & proceeded down the Buffaloe River, which flows into the Ohio at about 20 Leagues (as I conceive) distance from Fort au Bocuff. This River was small & at some Places very shallow, so that we towed the Canoes sometimes wading & sometimes taking ropes to the Shore a great Part of the way.

When we came into the Ohio we had a fine deep Water and a stream in our Favour, so that we rowed down that river from the Mouth of the Buffaloe to Du Quisne [Du Quesne] Fort on Monongahela, which I take to be 70 Leagues distant, in four Days & an half.

At our Arrival at Fort Du Quisne we found the Garrison busily employed in compleating that Fort, & stockadoeing it round at some Distance for the Security of the Soldiers Barracks (against any Surprise) which was built between the Stockadoes & the Glacis of the Fort. Fort du Quisne is built of square Logs transversely placed as is frequent in Mill Dams & the Interstices filled up with Earth. The Length of the Logs is about 16 Feet which is the Thickness of the Rampart. There is a Parapet raised on the Rampart of Logs, & the Length of the Curtains is about 30 Feet, & the Demigorge<sup>16</sup> of the Bastions about 80. The Fort is surrounded on the two Sides that do not front the Water with a Ditch about 12 feet wide & very deep, because there being no Covert way, the Musqueteers fire down from thence having a Glacis before them.

When the News of Ensign Jumonville's Defeat reached Us, our Force consisted of about 1400, Seven Hundred of whom were ordered out under the Command of Capt: Mercier to attack Mr Washington; after our return from the Meadows, a great Number of the Soldiers, who had been labouring at the Fort all the Spring, were sent off in Divisions to the several Forts between that & Canada; & some of those that came down last were sent to build a Fort somewhere on the head of the Ohio,<sup>17</sup> so that in October the Garrison at Du Quisne was reduced to 400 Men, who had Provisions enough at the Fort to last them two Years, notwithstanding a good deal of the Flour we brought down in the Spring proved to be damaged, & some of it spoiled by the rains that fell at that time.

In October last I had an opportunity of relieving myself and retiring. There were not then any Indians with the French, but a considerable Number were expected & said to be on their March thither.

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<sup>16</sup> "Demigorge" is usually called gorge, meaning the rear entrance to the bastion, or the distance between the points from which the bastion juts out.

<sup>17</sup> Probably Venango is meant here. La Chauvergne's father a Lieutenant of Marines, was in command.

## COURT SQUARE, FREDERICK

By CHARLES MCC. MATHIAS, JR.

COLONIAL civilization, with its British traditions and its American vigor, had expanded above the tidewater to the foot of the green walls of Maryland when, on June 10, 1748, Governor Samuel Ogle signed an Act of Assembly dividing Prince George's County and erecting a new county by the name of Frederick.<sup>1</sup> The Act also named a Commission to purchase land upon which to build a court house and prison, but the choice of a site for the county seat was not made without considerable thought and even controversy.<sup>2</sup>

It was not until two years later that land was actually purchased for a court house in Frederick County. On May 10, 1750, Daniel Dulany of Annapolis conveyed an estimated three acres of land to the Commissioners appointed by the Act of the Assembly to purchase the land for building a court house in Frederick County.<sup>3</sup> The price for the site was £18 current money of Maryland, paid by George Gordon, Sheriff of Frederick County, out of money levied on the taxable inhabitants of the County. It is interesting to note the restriction placed by Daniel Dulany in his deed which specified that the grant was "To the use of the inhabitants of the said County to build a Court House and prison thereon and to no other use, intent or purpose whatsoever."

The first Court House was begun in 1750 and its exterior was completed in the same year. Due to the demands of the military during the French and Indian War, the interior was not completed until 1756. There is a legend that General Braddock at one time delayed the progress of the work by calling upon the workmen to assist him in preparing his campaign against Fort Duquesne.

This first Court House was a wooden structure of one story

<sup>1</sup> Edward S. Delaplaine, *The Origin of Frederick County, Maryland* (Washington, 1949), pp. 17-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Archives of Maryland*, XLVI, 91, 143-144, 266, 299, 342, 510, 546.

<sup>3</sup> Land Records, Frederick County Court House (Liber B, Folio 267).

and a half. From all accounts, it apparently had a curious gallery that was reached by winding steps. For some reason, not now apparent, it seems to have had two jury boxes. It was in this building that the Judges of the Frederick County Court took action, on November 22, 1765, to repudiate the effect of the Stamp Act, and ordered the Clerk of the Court of Frederick County to continue to conduct the public business in spite of the absence of the stamps required by the British law. On the eve of the Revolution a group of Fredericktonians led by John Hanson, subsequently President of the Congress under the Articles of Confederation, met in the Court House and adopted resolutions on behalf of the beleaguered people of Boston.<sup>4</sup> A few years later, this old Court House was the scene of one of the most famous trials ever held in Maryland. On July 25, 1781, seven Tories were sentenced by Judge Alexander Contee Hanson to be carried to the gaol of Fredericktown, and be hanged and

cut down to the earth alive, and your entrails shall be taken out and burnt while you are yet alive, and your heads shall be cut off, your body shall be divided into four parts and your heads and quarters shall be placed where his excellency the Governor shall appoint. So Lord have mercy upon your poor souls.

Four of the doomed men were pardoned but Casper Fritchie, Yost Plecker, and Peter Sueman were executed in the Court House yard.<sup>5</sup> It is only fair to add that public opinion throughout Maryland immediately reacted against this revival of a barbaric form of punishment.<sup>6</sup>

In 1785 a new Court House was authorized by the General Assembly. Frederick's little known but highly talented architect, Andrew McCleery, was employed to supervise its construction. It is reported that he chose as his model the Court of Assizes in Dublin, Ireland. This building was apparently quickly pushed to completion and, from surviving pictures of it, it must have been a very handsome structure. An old Frederick newspaper, *The Key*, in a sketch of Frederick County published on February 17, 1798, describes the Court House as "much admired." Nellie Carter Garrott, in a paper prepared for the Historical Society of

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Page Andrews, *History of Maryland* (New York, 1929), p. 295.

<sup>5</sup> T. J. C. Williams, *History of Frederick County* (Hagerstown, 1910), I, 96-97.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Page Andrews, *Tercentenary History of Maryland* (Chicago, 1925), I, 655.



Frederick County in 1907,<sup>7</sup> pictured the second Court House as follows:

Its main entrance, a pretty colonial portico, faced the south. The east wing was the sheriff's office. The west wing was the side entrance to the Clerk's and Register's Office. The Court House ran north and south. The Judge's seat was at the northern end and the southern end was filled with benches for the people who came to Court. There was a rise of about two feet, where sat the Judge. To his right or west side was the jury, left or east side lawyers and some feet in front was the prisoner's box. A straight aisle came down the center of the room. In winter the court room was heated by two ten plate stoves, each large enough to have placed in it a half cord stick of wood. The second story above the sheriff's office the National Guards had as an armory. This company had been formed by General Edward Shriver for the Mexican War and upon their return took quarters in the Court House. The National Guards, however, went to pieces long before the Civil War. This room was used always as an armory, for the State Guards, and in it were stored the State guns and flags. The Home Guards were organized during the Civil War to protect the town. They kept also their arms in this part of the Court House. The window facing the south in the Sheriff's office was used as the poll for voting. The only one in the town. Adjoining the Court House on the west was the Register and Clerk office. It was a small two story house, slanting roof, door in center, with two windows on either side.

It was in this Court House of 1785 that many of the most distinguished members of the Frederick County Bar practiced their profession. Among them were Thomas Johnson, Governor of Maryland and Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States,<sup>8</sup> Judge Richard Potts, member of the Continental Congress and United States Senator,<sup>9</sup> Francis Scott Key, author of the National Anthem, and Roger Brooke Taney, Chief Justice of the United States.<sup>10</sup>

The site chosen for the Court House in 18th century Fredericktown would be known, in 20th century parlance, as suburban. The concept of a "square" had not materialized in 1791, when a French visitor described the Court House in his journal:<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Archives of Historical Society of Frederick County.

<sup>8</sup> Governor (1777-1779), succeeded John Rutledge on U. S. Supreme Court in 1791 and served until 1793.

<sup>9</sup> Served in Continental Congress (1781-1782); Chief Judge, Fifth Judicial Circuit (1791-1793); succeeded to Charles Carroll of Carrollton's seat in the U. S. Senate in 1793, resigned 1796.

<sup>10</sup> U. S. Attorney General (1831-1833); Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1836-1864).

<sup>11</sup> Ferdinand-M. Bayard, *Travels of a Frenchman in Maryland and Virginia, 1791*, Translated and Edited by Ben C. McCary (Ann Arbor, 1950), p. 16.



The only public building worthy of notice is the town hall.<sup>12</sup> It stands on a little sod covered hill where the children go to engage in the diversions of their age. This building is square. It has a small cupola and a peristyle supported by columns of Tuscan order.

After some years a movement was started to enclose the Court House grounds with iron railings and ornamental iron gates after the fashion of a London square. It has been reported that the County authorities were staggered by the expense of this project, and so the railings were erected by Col. John McPherson at his own expense.<sup>13</sup> This handsome iron work was of the same type as that which now encloses the Ross (McPherson) and Mathias (Brien) houses, and the imposing wrought iron gates were of the same character as the renowned wrought iron gateways that have made Charleston, South Carolina, so famous. The Frederick newspaper of that period, *The Reservoir and Public Reflector*, is quoted<sup>14</sup> as reporting that the completion of the iron fence was marked by a public celebration which happily coincided with the July 4th festivities in 1823.

Forty years passed with little reported change in the appearance of the Court House and its grounds. It was during the period of discord and restlessness which marked the descent of the nation into Civil War that the next major change in the Court House took place. On May 8, 1861, the second Court House burned to the ground. Numerous accounts note that as the flames destroyed the building and the roof began to weaken, the bell in the cupola tolled its own death knell.

After this tragic fire, the present or third Court House was erected. It is far larger than the previous buildings and replaces not only the old Court House but also the separate Clerk's office which stood on Church Street. In its day this building was considered one of the finest examples of up-to-date construction. Parts of it were designed to be fireproof, a novel idea in 1862.

The tide of the Civil War swirled around the new Court House but left it with no visible scars. The next change that came to the Court House yard was toward the latter part of the 19th century by which time the handsome iron work that surrounded

<sup>12</sup> An obvious misnomer.

<sup>13</sup> Notes of Miss Emma R. Gittinger on history of Frederick County Court House in Archives of Historical Society of Frederick County.

<sup>14</sup> Nellie Carter Garrott paper, *supra*.

the Court House grounds was out of fashion. A popular movement arose to "Take down the railings." Public entertainments were organized to raise funds for the work, and when, shortly before the turn of the century, enough money had been accumulated, the fence was taken down.

Since that time there has been little major change in the Court House or its immediate surroundings. A fountain and several monuments have been erected in the Square, and the general scene has been little changed for the last half century.

In the same Act of Assembly which authorized the building of the Court House, the construction of a jail was also sanctioned. The first jail was built on what is now Council Street on the present site of the Ross (McPherson) and Mathias (Brien) houses. Apparently the original structure was not altogether satisfactory. Petitions for its improvement were presented to the legislature in Annapolis. The Assembly proceedings of December 4, 1766, record that on that date it was represented that

The public prison in Frederick County is at present very insecure and that frequent escapes happen which might be prevented by building a stone wall quite round the said prison and a house at the gate thereof, for the gaoler to live in, and that such yard would contribute much to the health of the prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

This representation was received with favor by the legislature and a stone wall was built. Even this improvement did not provide lasting satisfaction, and on January 26, 1815, the legislature authorized the Levy Court of Frederick County to sell the lots on which the old jail stood and to build a new jail on another site.<sup>16</sup> Consequently in 1817 the Justices of the Levy Court conveyed the eastern part of the old jail site to John Brien<sup>17</sup> and the western portion to Colonel John McPherson,<sup>18</sup> Brien's partner and father-in-law. Colonel McPherson and Brien collaborated in the erection of their homes which were designed as counter-parts of each other. The main section of each house adjoined, while each end of the sizable mass thus formed was flanked by a smaller wing.

Both houses are set back from the street with small yards

<sup>15</sup> *Archives of Maryland*, LXI, 243.

<sup>16</sup> *Laws of Maryland*, 1814, Chapter LXXXVIII, *An Act for the Erection of a new Gaol in Frederick County, etc.*

<sup>17</sup> Land Records, Frederick County Court House (Liber JS4, Folio 525).

<sup>18</sup> Land Records, Frederick County Court House (Liber JS4, Folio 523).

separating them from the pavement. These yards are enclosed by iron railings which are pierced by gateways flanked by massive piers upon which swing graceful wrought-iron gates. The gates of both houses lead to high marble steps, guarded by slender iron balustrades. The entrances culminate in identical doorways which are surmounted by elliptical arches. Small fluted columns frame the doors, and the halls within are lighted by leaded fanlights and side lights.

The fenestration of these houses is simple, but dignified, with two windows on either side of each entrance and with unbroken rows of five windows on the second and third floors. In keeping with the Palladian tradition the windows are graduated in size with small apertures in the high "English" basement, large windows on the first floor and successively smaller ones on each of the upper floors.

Both of these houses were provided with a very elaborate series of outbuildings or in the contemporary phrase, "offices": stables, carriage houses, smoke houses, and slave quarters. These auxiliary structures were so complete as to render the establishments virtually self-sufficient, just as though they were located on some remote country estate. The outbuildings of the McPherson (now the Ross) house have survived intact and display an almost unique example of Maryland domestic architecture. The square icehouse with its diminutive cupola, the low slave quarters and the rambling stables, all set in a garden surrounded by brick walls still convey an impression of the security and independence of life in the days when Maryland was being transformed from a colony into a State.

Mr. Brien and Colonel McPherson were prominent men in the County, and their new homes were the scene of much elaborate hospitality. The ballroom on the third floor of the Brien house was the setting in 1824 for a reception tendered to General LaFayette in the course of his triumphal tour of that year. A meeting of Columbia Lodge, No. 58, A. F. and A. M. was held in Colonel McPherson's "West parlor" to welcome LaFayette as a brother Mason during the same visit.<sup>19</sup>

To the west of the McPherson (Ross) house on Council Street lies that lot of land laid off by C. Beatty, County Surveyor,

<sup>19</sup> Inscription on Masonic apron worn by Lafayette now in possession of Columbia Lodge No. 58, A.F. and A.M.

by order of the Frederick County Court for the Visitors of Frederick County Public School. This land was appropriated to the school under the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly of the Province of Maryland passed at the Session of 1769.<sup>20</sup> The building which many generations of Fredericktonians knew as the Frederick Academy was erected in 1796 and was originally a two-story structure. The Academy yard served as playground and meeting place for the community. The old school building was distinguished for its balanced proportions. The central doorway, several steps above the street level, was flanked on either side by three large windows. The length of the façade was relieved by a middle projection of about a foot, which probably had a pediment at the roof level. Subsequently, a two story wing containing living quarters for the principal was added to the east. The still later addition of a third story reduced the existence of a pediment to the realm of speculation. It also somewhat spoiled the proportions of the building but failed to destroy its charm. The interior was noteworthy for a double stairway which was united on the landing before rising to the second floor.

After over a century of service the Academy ceased its operations as a private boys school, but its building continued to serve many useful public functions. In 1935 the building and its grounds were conveyed by the President and Visitors of Frederick College to the Trustees appointed by the will of Margaret C. Artz, who were to found and maintain the Artz Library. Work was begun to restore the old building to its original appearance, but before much progress had been made, plans were changed and the venerable building was razed and replaced by the present library building.

A plat made in 1815<sup>21</sup> designates all that land lying west of Record Street as the property of the heirs of William Ritchie. At that date it contained a house, for the deed conveying the property to Dr. William Tyler describes the property as being William Ritchie's residence. Dr. Tyler, in about 1815 or shortly thereafter, built the handsome double houses that stand at the head of Council Street. As far as can be ascertained, the general outline of these houses when they were built was the same as it is today. The outward appearance of the houses, once Georgian,

<sup>20</sup> *Archives of Maryland*, LXII, 153-154.

<sup>21</sup> Land Records, Frederick County Court House (Liber JS5, Folio 156).

has changed very greatly. This change was occasioned by almost complete reconstruction after a disastrous fire in 1842. That fire is described in an unpublished manuscript by Catherine Sue (Thomas) Markell,<sup>22</sup> as follows:

On the afternoon of March 31, 1842, these buildings [Dr. Tyler's] were destroyed by fire. A furious gale prevailed at the time and pieces of burning timber were carried in all directions causing alarms to be sent out from at least 20 different places. Ignitions from these strained embers occurred at the Academy immediately opposite which was saved only by the constant use of wet blankets; the Court House steeple, where the flames were extinguished by the carrying of a string of hose up into its belfry; the Independent Engine House, then standing in Court Square, Keefer's Blacksmith Shop adjoining the old Reformed Church, City Hotel Stables, Koontz's dwelling on Market, and Keller's Rope factory on Patrick Street besides many dwellings on these thoroughfares. Bucket brigades were formed to the town creek and Tyler's pond, and men, women, children, black and white, worked side by side with a will, dextrously passing from hand to hand the quaint leathern pails for filling the little engine reservoir, and returning them empty by the opposite file. A faithful reproduction of this scene, in the form of a well preserved banner painted in oil fifty years ago by the talented native artist, John J. Markell, is still extant. [A photograph of this banner is now in the Library of the Maryland Historical Society.]

Following the fire these houses were rebuilt and were ornamented in the taste fashionable during the 1840's. This was the period of the Classic Revival, and its influence is apparent in the balustrades and the columned doorways and porches that are still in place. These houses are built close to the street, but privacy is insured by the use of a high basement which projects the first floor windows far above the gaze of the passer-by. The doors to each house are placed next to each other, sheltered from the morning sun by formal pillared porches, painted white. Each of these neighborly doorways is pierced by a transom and sidelights, and the plan of the first floors is completed by two windows on the outer side of each entrance. The architectural unity of these twin houses is emphasized by a broad panel cornice extending across the double front perforated by the miniature windows which replaced dormers in the designs of the Revivalists. This panel is crowned by a graceful white balustrade stretching along the roof line of both houses.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> This manuscript consisting of the personal recollections of Mrs. Markell (1828-1901) is now in the Archives of the Historical Society of Frederick County.

<sup>23</sup> Now the homes of Colonel Philip R. Winebrener and Mr. Robert T. Fisher.



Proceeding southward on Record Street, the next property is the site of the building in which, as has already been mentioned, William Ritchie resided. This ancient structure is said to have been built about 1750. It was a low one-story structure with a porch running across its front. Legend has made this building the first Court House, but the facts do not bear out this story. What is more likely is that William Ritchie, who was a longtime Clerk of the Court, may have conducted some of the public business in his home so that the house was remembered by some persons as the place where they had transacted legal business.<sup>24</sup>

The gracious white house, on Church Street, which is now the home of Charles S. Lane, III, stands on property that was conveyed by several grantors in 1821 to John Nelson. Nelson was one of Frederick's most distinguished citizens,<sup>25</sup> who occupied many public offices of great importance, and the home that he built has always been one of the most admired in Frederick. He probably began construction of the house shortly after he purchased the land and completed it about 1823. It later passed through several owners, including members of the Steiner, McPherson, and Sifford families, until it became the home of Judge John Ritchie in 1880. Little more than half of the original house remains today but its appearance in Judge Ritchie's time was described in an article published in *The News Citizen* in 1933.

Behind those gorgeous twin horse-chestnut trees stood the beautiful home of Chief Judge and Mrs. John Ritchie, those remarkable parents of eighteen children. 'Ritchie's wall' was a Frederick institution over which we ran, jumped and raced up and down. Years ago the wing of the house, the old flagstone driveway with its large iron gates, and the Judge's fascinating little white brick office with green door and shutters gave way to modern buildings. The yard, where every kind of fruit tree grew, with its circle of old English boxwood and abundance of old fashioned flowers was a veritable Eden when the trees were in bloom.

Next to the Lane home on Church Street stands the property which was conveyed to Dr. John Tyler in 1813. A year later in 1814, a house was erected on this lot by Dr. Tyler which even today is sometimes called "The Spite House." The origin of this name is traced, according to legend, to a plan to extend Record

<sup>24</sup> Site of the present home of Edward D. Storm, Esq.

<sup>25</sup> U. S. House of Representatives (1821-1823), Chargé d'Affaires to the Two Sicilies (1831-1832), Attorney General of the United States (1843-1845) and Secretary of State *ad interim* (1844) in the Cabinet of President Tyler.

Street to meet Patrick which Dr. Tyler countered by placing a substantial building directly in the path of the proposed thoroughfare. This home was gradually enlarged by successive owners and today presents a picturesque appearance with casually projecting wings and rambling back buildings. The front door, often ajar in warm weather, reveals the unusually wide hall ornamented by an elliptical arch supported by engaged columns. The width of the hall gives a particularly graceful air to the winding stair that rises from it.<sup>26</sup>

Standing on the corner of Church and Court (formerly Publick) Street is the Potts house, one of the better known of Frederick's old homes. The Potts lot was said by Ernest Helfenstein in his *History of All Saints Parish*<sup>27</sup> to have been the place chosen by Daniel Dulany for the first church in the Parish. For some reason this choice was not followed, and this lot was conveyed as part of the original Court House grounds to the County Commissioners. After the abandonment of the jail on Council Street, Roger Nelson negotiated the purchase of these lots, but died before he actually received title to them. After his death, the purchase was completed in 1818 by Richard Potts, son of Judge Richard Potts.

The house built by Richard Potts on this site was designed for him by Robert Mills, President Andrew Jackson's Architect of Public Buildings and designer of the Washington Monument in Baltimore, and was erected by Frederick builders under the direction of the McCleery brothers. Mills' plans and the McCleerys' ledgers for this project are still extant.<sup>28</sup> As designed by Mills, the principal feature of the house is the wide front entrance with its double doors ornamented with small oval panels. The leaded tracery of the elliptical fanlight and the side lights has been much admired and copied by modern builders. The door was set to the side of the main house, although the two windows occupying the remainder of the front were balanced to some extent by the wing to the north, known as the "office" to many generations of the Potts family. The end walls of the house rose to crows' steps which were connected by a classic railing, or balustrade, extended across the roof. To the rear a long service wing

<sup>26</sup> Presently owned by Mrs. William Schnauffer.

<sup>27</sup> (Frederick, 1932) p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> Now in the possession of Joseph W. Uner of Frederick.

was constructed parallel to the façade of the house. This wing was built with diminishing roof levels, providing a telescopic effect, and adjoined a hip-roofed smoke house, crowned with a pineapple finial. In over a century of occupancy by the Potts family some changes were inevitably made, including the addition of a slightly disproportionate third story. By and large, however, the house retains its original charm and still displays the skill of its distinguished architect.<sup>29</sup>

Court Square today has a few gaps representing old structures of historical or architectural interest that have not survived the march of progress. The modern visitor will, nevertheless, find a concentration of distinguished buildings, each with its own character, yet conforming to a common pattern. A stroll around Court Square will amply reward the student of architecture and history or the layman who merely enjoys savoring the atmosphere in which Maryland's history and traditions have been developing and growing through more than two centuries.

<sup>29</sup> Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. John R. Cheatham.

## FRIENDSHIP VALLEY FARM

By RUTH GIST PICKENS

UNTIL 1938 a home of the Gist family, "Friendship Valley Farm" is one of the oldest estates in Western Maryland.<sup>1</sup> At first it was considered a lonely, wild, and dangerous place, because it was not located near one of the waterways, then the lanes of traffic. A Gist had been among the early settlers of Maryland, however, and his grandchildren were a sturdy breed of pioneers who thrived in lonely places.<sup>2</sup> Like other early families they soon built houses of logs nurtured by the wilderness and later of bricks made from the earth itself. In spite of their primitive crudeness, these homes were not without charm.

Christopher Gist, the first of the family in Maryland, was a 17th-century immigrant.<sup>3</sup> His will, recorded at the Hall of Records, Annapolis, is dated 1691.<sup>4</sup> His wife was Edith Cromwell, granddaughter of Richard Cromwell, said to have been a relative of Oliver Cromwell.<sup>5</sup> The descendants of Christopher Gist have owned many tracts of land. Upon one of these tracts Joshua Gist, great-grandson of the immigrant, built the large house that is the subject of this article. This house is still standing on the tract patented as "Long Farm." The property, subsequently given its present name, remained in the family from 1774 to 1938. Its first Gist owner was Thomas, Senior, the father of Colonel Joshua Gist

<sup>1</sup> This article is based upon available original records in the possession of the author, in the Maryland Historical Society, and in the Hall of Records; upon published biographical sketches and genealogies; and upon family tradition.

See also plaque placed on house in 1932.

<sup>2</sup> A favorite quotation of George Gist, a civil engineer and the brother of the late Robert Gist, was "Something lost beyond the ranges, something hidden—go and find it."

<sup>3</sup> For genealogy, see Christopher Johnston, "Gist Family of Baltimore County," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, VIII (1913), 373-381; Wilson Gee, *The Gist Family of South Carolina and its Maryland Antecedents* (1934), pp. 3-20; Katherine W. Blakeslee, *Mordecai Gist and His American Progenitors* (1923); and J. T. Scharf, *History of Western Maryland* (1882), I, 75, II, 920-923.

<sup>4</sup> Baltimore County R. M. no. H. S., 331. The name is spelled "Guest."

<sup>5</sup> Gee, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6. Francis B. Culver in his article, "Cromwell Family, A Possible Cromwell Clue," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XIII (1918), 386-403, found no evidence to support such a claim of relationship.

and General Mordecai Gist,<sup>6</sup> and the brother of the Christopher Gist<sup>7</sup> who in 1753 guided George Washington into the wilds of Virginia and the Northwest on his mission to establish trade with the Indians. This Thomas Gist never lived at Friendship Valley Farm. His son Thomas may have lived there for a short time. The last Gist to own Friendship Valley Farm was the elder Thomas's great-great-grandson, Robert Gist, who died in 1937. His daughter, the author, was the last Gist born and the last Gist married in the old home which is located one half mile south of Westminster, Carroll County. It is now the property of Mr. A. J. Lamme, Jr., who named it Friendship Valley Farm.

Thomas Gist, Sr., fought in the French and Indian War and was at Braddock's defeat, Fort Duquesne, July 9, 1755. In all known records he is referred to as Captain Thomas Gist. He was a planter and surveyor of Baltimore County. In 1741 he surveyed the land, part of which is now Friendship Valley Farm, then granted to Edward Fell, and called "Fells Dale."<sup>8</sup> In 1774 Captain Thomas Gist and his son Thomas bought Fells Dale for £450 from "Allen Pearson of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster in the kingdom of Great Britain."<sup>9</sup> Here a substantial dwelling house, a wash house, a barn, a blacksmith shop, slave cabins, and wagon sheds were built. Tradition has it that all of these structures were built of logs. The wash house, all but one of the slave cabins, and the blacksmith shop were torn down during the lifetime of Robert Gist—the log wash house in 1896 and the blacksmith shop in 1916. One slave cabin stands today. Joshua Gist, son of Thomas, Sr., lived here in 1765, and to this house he brought his bride, Sarah Harvey, in 1772. Ten of their twelve children were born in the log house and the last two in the brick house which was built by that time.

The will of Thomas Gist, Sr., dated 1787, reads, "I also Give Devise and Bequeth unto my son Joshua all of that part of a tract of land called Fells Dale it being the land where my said son Joshua now lives."<sup>10</sup> After his father's death, Col.

<sup>6</sup> *Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 324-325.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 323-324.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. record of resurvey, MS in the possession of the author.

<sup>9</sup> Original deed in the possession of the author. At that time £450 was a large sum to pay for wilderness land. Thomas Gist, however, knew the quality of this tract because his son Joshua had acquired a 30-acre tract called "Long Ridge" that lay within Fells Dale.

<sup>10</sup> Baltimore County Wills, liber 4, f. 297, Hall of Records, Annapolis.



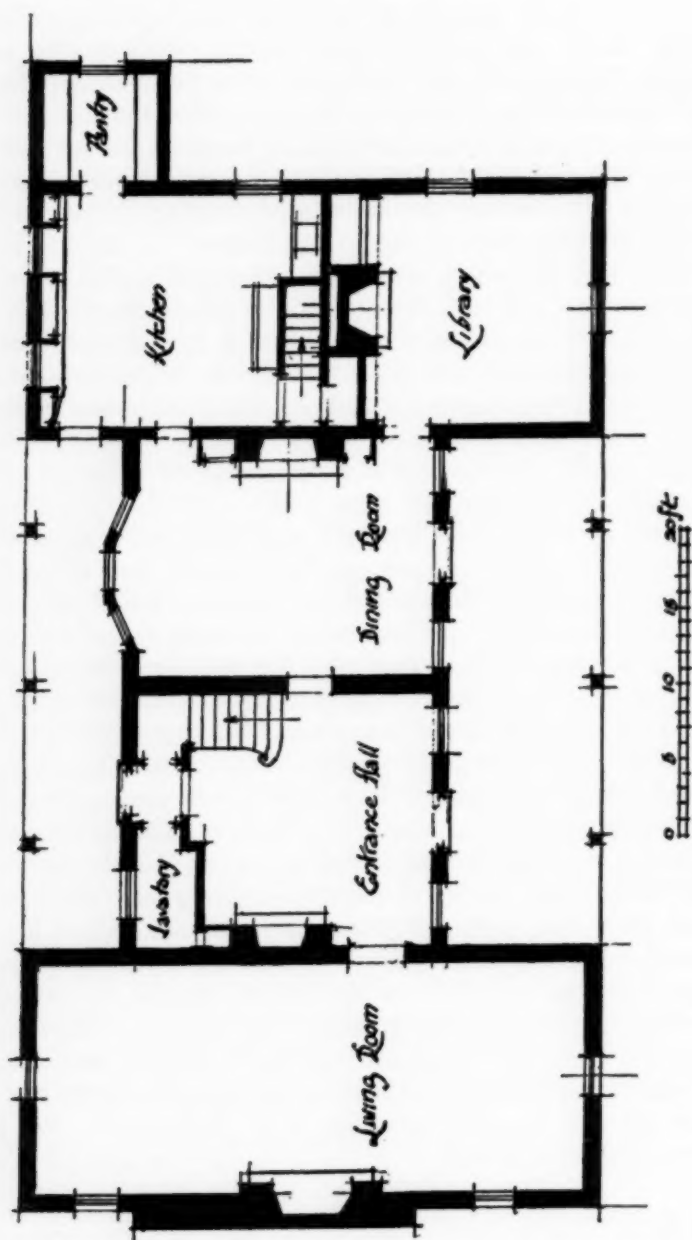
Joshua Gist applied for a resurvey. This resurvey was made in December, 1791, and was patented June 4, 1793.<sup>11</sup> The land resurveyed totalled 468 acres and was then partly in Frederick and partly in Baltimore counties, now Carroll County.

Between 1790 and 1795, reliable family tradition has it—though the exact date is not recorded, a slave woman, homesick for a more urban life, during the absence of the family carried the furniture out of the original log house, strewed live coals through the rooms, and burned it down.<sup>12</sup> By doing this she hoped to force the family to move to Baltimore. She did not accomplish her purpose because the family moved into the wash house, and in 1795 Col. Joshua Gist completed a brick house near the site of the log dwelling. The bricks were made on the place; some of them are twenty-two inches long.

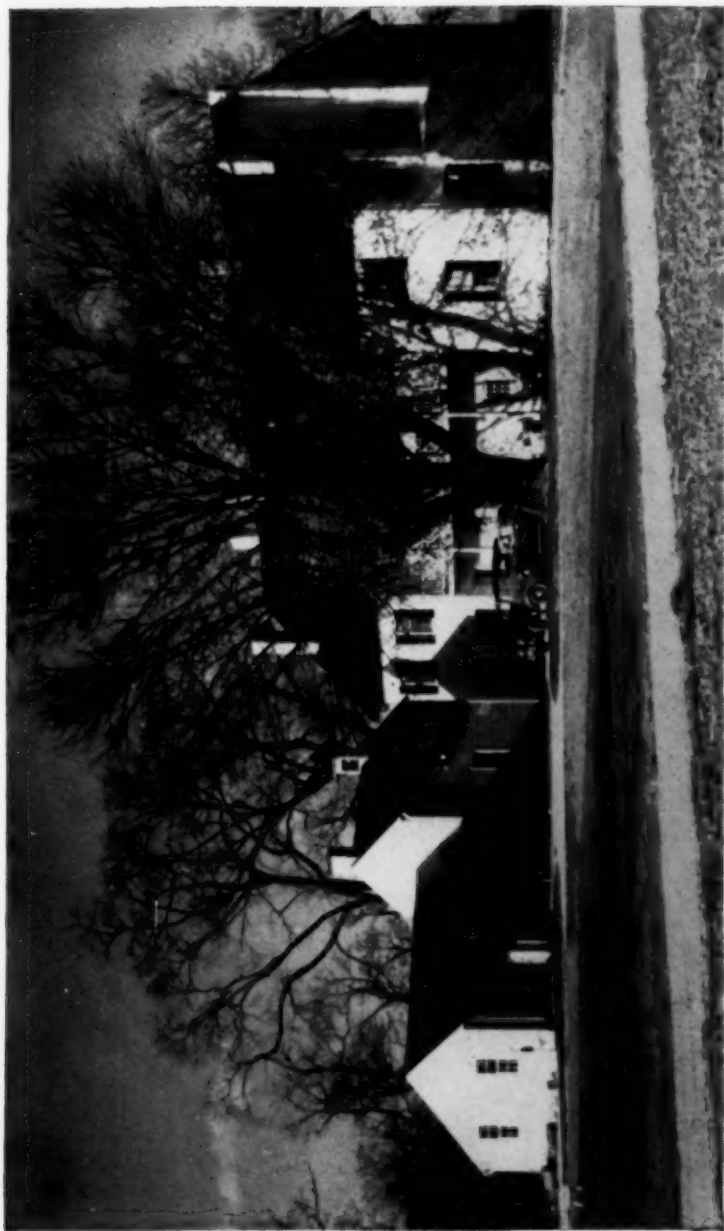
Everything about this home is simplicity itself. It was at first a one-room deep house, as were many early Maryland farm houses; but partitions have gone up and come down since then. Nevertheless, this home has managed to keep much of its original character. It is shaped like a fat, capital letter I and originally had a gambrel roof. To get this effect the roof, without dormer windows, covered the inset porches front and back. These two-storied porches are of brick on the ground floor and of wood for the second story, which has a balustrade. The three white wooden porch columns were supported at their base by four iron legs of "Dutch club foot" design, which protected the base of the columns from rot by dampness. The outside walls were covered with plaster, to make a smooth surface when the slaves white-washed them each spring; for every building and fence, too, gleamed with their yearly coat of fresh white. The late Robert Gist removed this plaster and had the bricks painted. He also changed the gambrel roof to the present gable, in this way improving the second story rooms. Otherwise the exterior of the house is as it was the day it was built. On the inside many of the eighteen-inch-thick brick partitions are still there, and all the mantels are the original ones—even those above the few fireplaces that were rebuilt.

<sup>11</sup> MS in the possession of the author.

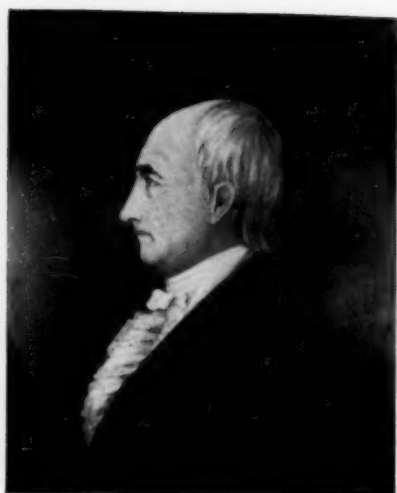
<sup>12</sup> The foundations of this house were in evidence for many decades. The author and her sister when children played there often. Recently a bulldozer was used to obliterate these remains of the house.



FLOOR PLAN OF FRIENDSHIP VALLEY FARM



REAR VIEW OF FRIENDSHIP VALLEY FARM.  
Showing "New" Wash House with Bell Tower.



COL. JOSHUA GIST AND HIS WIFE SARAH (HARVEY) GIST.  
Portraits thought to have been painted ca. 1800-1807. Initialed "JAM" or "JMA."



PANELED OVERMANTEL AND FIREPLACE IN THE DRAWING ROOM.

What this house lacks in grandeur is made up in quaintness. There are two front entrances, one into the dining room and one into the front hall. Each entrance has a single, batten door hung on long hand-wrought, iron hinges. The inner side is plain with nail heads showing but the outer is paneled. To Col. Joshua Gist the paneled side had a special meaning. He called it the Cross and Bible, because he wished all to enter his home by the sign of the Cross, a home blessed with the Bible. Only one of the front doors still has the original wrought-iron latch, a type much in style when the house was built. It was locked on the inside by pushing a bolt into a socket and on the outside by unscrewing the handle and carrying it off as one would carry a key. So large was this handle that it could be used for a weapon of defense if its carrier was assailed by a highwayman. Family tradition has it that on several occasions it came in handy for just that purpose.

The main halls, connected by the front stairway, both downstairs and upstairs, are large, square rooms, each with an open fireplace. A door opposite the front door once opened to a view of a pretty boxwood garden. Of the boxwood, the lilac, and the sweet shrub, not one remains. The only evidence that once such a garden existed is an English boxwood which the author saw the late Robert Gist transplant from the garden to the front yard. The original stairway is gone, but the new one is in keeping with the rest of the house. The original was a replica of the one at Colonel Joshua's childhood home, Stone Hall, located near Shawan, Baltimore County. However, the identical molded chair rails in each hall as well as the mantels are the original ones.

To the left of the front door is a drawing room that is forty feet long and sixteen feet wide. It has four eighteen-paned windows, one at each end and two on the side. At first there were two open fireplaces to keep the room warm in the coldest weather; now the two chimneys are connected to one fireplace. Here as elsewhere in the house there is no attempt at elaboration. The overmantel has the plainest panel and joins a simple molded cornice at the ceiling. The floors in the drawing room and the halls are the original oak boards, which range from four to six inches in width.

It was in the drawing room that all the family parties, weddings, and funerals took place. During the last two years of Colonel Joshua Gist's life when he became too feeble to climb the stairs



(he lived to be 91) one end of the drawing room was partitioned off for his bedroom. Here he kept his coffin, into which he would have his personal servant lay him out and then call the family to comment on his appearance. Each time he would ask them to promise not to bury him until the third day after his death. He feared being buried alive, because his brother, General Mordecai Gist, was thought to be dead in the 1780s and would have been buried, but the family awaited the arrival of General Mordecai's dearest friend, General Nathanael Greene. On the third day, when he did arrive, General Greene asked to be allowed to sit for a little while beside his dead friend. He noticed that General Gist moved one eyelid. General Gist was revived and lived several years longer, married the third time, and had another son. Since then the Gists have kept their dead three days before burial.

The dining room, on the other side of the hall, duplicates the size of the halls. It, too, has a chair board and an open fireplace. To the left of the fireplace is a plain paneled cupboard, where the Gists kept their jellies and preserves. The china was stored in a Hepplewhite corner cupboard and a Hepplewhite sideboard.

The kitchen, one end of which was formerly used as a spinning room, is at the opposite end of the house from the drawing room. The old kitchen was identical in design with the kitchen in the Potts-Howes house, Washington's headquarters at Valley Forge, except that it was twice as large. The end that was a spinning room is now partitioned off as a library study and has an open fireplace.

A few paces from the back door stands the "new wash house," built in 1860. From that year until 1896 there were two wash houses, the old log one and the new weatherboarded one. The newer one is a two-story, two room house with a bell tower on top. The upstairs room was the hired men's bedroom. The large downstairs room was used for a summer kitchen during the warm months, for apple-butter boiling and butchering during the cold months; and there each Monday the washing was done. The bell in the tower is the old one. It has a clear tone all its own, because there is reputed to be a small amount of gold in its metal composition. This bell for almost two centuries has been heard for miles around, announcing mealtime or summoning help in an emergency.

Col. Joshua Gist commanded the 20th Maryland militia which

guarded the State against Tory uprisings during the American Revolution. The regiment was called to active duty and helped quell the Whiskey Rebellion. The brigade orders to subdue this uprising, a list of officers and men, and a description of their uniforms are recorded in his day book.<sup>13</sup>

Colonel Gist was reared in the Anglican faith. As a youth he attended a private seminary, St. Paul's Parish School, conducted by an Episcopal clergyman. However, he became a staunch Methodist, who lodged and paid the first Methodist circuit rider in America. He built a schoolhouse, which is still standing, and boarded and paid the teacher, so that the children of the community could learn their three R's. Here on Sunday Methodist meetings were held. The Colonel was a leader in politics, and near the end of his life he was instrumental in the formation of Carroll County from parts of Frederick and Baltimore counties. He died in 1838 and is buried in the Gist family graveyard, an acre of his plantation which he willed to the Gist family forever. Here is buried General Mordecai's older son, Independent, who married Colonel Joshua's daughter Rachel. She, too, is buried here, as are their son Mordecai and their grandson Robert Gist, the last Gist of Friendship Valley Farm.

Only three families since the white man came have lived on Friendship Valley Farm: Gist, Herth, and Lamme. The Herths bought it after Robert Gist's death, but Mr. George Herth lived only a short time. After his death Mr. A. J. Lamme, Jr., purchased it and is living there today.

<sup>13</sup> MS volume in the possession of the author. The order for uniforms reads: "Cavalry Short coats blue faced with Buff—Buff waistcoats and breeches yellow buttons cocked Hats—Infantry Long Coats faced with red White Waistcoats and breeches white cocked Hats feathers tip with red. Light Infantry Short coats Blue two Row of small white buttons each Side light made overalls of Blue Round Hats covered with Bear Skinn a side cock with small white buttons Rifle company Orange Colored Hunting Shirts light overalls of same color Round Hats covered with beaver Skins a side cock with small white button the whole Burgade to wear Black stocks F Baly Brigader."

## THOMAS JOHN CLAGGETT: ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT, 1861-62

Edited by WILLIAM D. HOYT, JR.

DURING the night of September 17, 1861, nineteen members of the Maryland Legislature were arrested on suspicion of disloyalty to the Federal Government, or perhaps more accurately, on suspicion of sympathy with the Confederacy. The arrests were made on orders from Major General John A. Dix, military commander of the Department of Maryland, as part of the effort to keep Maryland on the Union side of the conflict then increasing in size and vigor. It was feared that the Maryland Legislature, scheduled to meet in Frederick (where Southern sympathies were thought to be less strong than in Annapolis), would pass an ordinance of secession, and that such action might lead to the loss of the national capital and possibly the Union cause.<sup>1</sup>

Among those taken in charge and carried to Fort McHenry in Baltimore were three members of the House of Delegates from Frederick County: Andrew Kessler, William E. Salmon, and Thomas John Claggett.<sup>1a</sup> At noon on September 19, they were taken to Annapolis and put on board the steamship *Baltimore* for transfer to Fort Lafayette in New York harbor.<sup>2</sup> Later, the group was moved again, this time still farther northward, to Fort Warren in Boston harbor; and there they remained until

<sup>1</sup> The situation in Maryland and Baltimore is described fully in Morgan Dix, *Memoirs of John Adams Dix* (New York, 1883), II, 24-35. The arrest of the legislators was suggested by General George B. McClellan and was directed by Secretary of War Simon Cameron with the approval of President Lincoln and Governor Thomas H. Hicks. See William B. Hesseltine, *Lincoln and the War Governors* (New York, 1948), p. 214.

<sup>1a</sup> Claggett was the grandson of Thomas John Claggett (1743-1816), first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Maryland.—EDITOR.

<sup>2</sup> *Baltimore Sun*, September 20, 1861. On September 3, Dix wrote McClellan that he did not think Fort McHenry a suitable place for political prisoners. "It is too near the seat of war, which may probably be extended to us. It is also too near a great town, in which are multitudes who sympathize with them, . . ." Dix, *Memoirs*, II, 29. The book does not mention any individual cases.

they were released on various dates throughout the following winter.

The reactions of Thomas John Claggett to his arrest and imprisonment, together with the impressions of others concerned in his case, make an interesting study illustrative of the confusion existing at the outbreak of war between the North and the South. Claggett was patently bewildered at the turn of events, did not understand why he was arrested, and continued to proclaim his innocence of wrong-doing. His friends exerted considerable influence to procure his release, and his brother-in-law, Dr. Thomas Maddox, of Tappan's Cross Roads, Washington County, carried on a vigorous correspondence with men prominent in public life with the same end in view.<sup>3</sup>

The Federal officers involved in the matter held contrary opinions, however. General Nathaniel Banks' aide-de-camp, R. Morris Copeland, reported from Frederick on September 18, the day after the arrest, that Claggett was among "seven members of the house of a very bitter character," and on the 23rd General Dix, commanding in Baltimore, named Claggett as one of the "decided secessionists."<sup>4</sup> A government memorandum concerning the arrested members of the Maryland Legislature described Claggett as "known to be one of the faction of that body which engaged in plots to pass an act of secession in that State."<sup>5</sup> Evidently, the member from Frederick County was a marked man in the eyes of officialdom.

Claggett's first letter to Dr. Maddox from Fort Warren was dated November 12 and gave a general picture of the conditions under which the imprisoned legislators existed:

Fort Warren Boston Harb

My dear Sir

I received your letter of the 3rd Nov and was happy to learn that you were all well & enjoying yourselves. . . .

I am also pleased to hear that you think the new rector of St Marks a good selection. We have had religious services every sunday since I have

<sup>3</sup> The Maddox letters (Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Vertical File) in the Maryland Historical Society deal with this episode and include the letters from Claggett to Maddox quoted below.

<sup>4</sup> *The War of the Rebellion; Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (130 vols., Washington, 1894-1900), Series 2, I, 683-89 *passim*. (Hereafter cited as *O.R.*).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 672-73, quoting Record Book, State Department, "Arrests for Disloyalty."

been in the forts except the first. At Lafayette an ex Lieutenant of the Navy read the episcopal service and a sermon. Here we enjoy the services of a presbyterian preacher who was captured with another big gun by Col. Geary at Harpers ferry. There are men here of almost all professions and classes in social life. We have an attendance of good society if intellectual and cultivated persons all of one sex can constitute good society, for altho in the land of the Pilgrim Fathers I have met with none of the pilgrim daughters.

Tell sister that I am much more comfortable here than she would suppose. I occupy a very good room finished nicely and intended for an officer of the Fort. Those who have money and think proper to use it can have almost any thing they may want. We have daily communication with Boston and get all important news as soon as we would at home. . . .

I do not in the least wonder that you were unable to find out why I became a state prisoner when I myself have no way of knowing. I can imagine no reason for it except my accidental connection with the Legislature and therefore have made no move in the matter preferring to wait until after the election, when that reason for my detention will have ceased. Instead of my informing you of the charges against me, I have to ask you to try and find out what they are and what ought to be done. Possibly if you meet with your Senator Mr. Fiery you might learn something. Please let me hear from you.

Yours truly

Thos. Jno. Claggett

Nov 12th 61<sup>o</sup>

Meanwhile, Dr. Maddox had begun his campaign to procure Claggett's release. On October 10, he wrote to Charles B. Calvert, Maryland member of Congress, about the arrest:

Mr. Claggett is not in favor of secession; and has never given 'aid or comfort' to the enemy; is a quiet and peaceable farmer. He was arrested in his house—on his farm. His arrest I believe was at the instance of evil-disposed neighbors who have misrepresented—probably misunderstood—his position.<sup>7</sup>

Governor Hicks was contacted, and on November 12 he wrote Secretary of State William E. Seward that to liberate such men as Claggett "will do us little injury in Maryland."<sup>8</sup> The Rt. Rev. William R. Whittingham, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Maryland, expressed sympathy with Claggett's difficulties, but said he knew no one among state or national officials, and besides had

<sup>7</sup> MS., Maddox letters. Omissions in all three of Claggett's letters are purely personal comments.

<sup>8</sup> *O.R., op. cit.*, p. 700. Calvert (1808-64) was active in the movement to create a Department of Agriculture.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 705.



made it a positive policy never to ask favors of any kind from civil authorities. He would, however, continue to appeal to a Higher Power on Claggett's behalf.<sup>9</sup> Even George R. Dodge, provost marshal in Baltimore, in a memorandum to General Dix on the position of the political prisoners in the public estimation, listed Claggett as "voted wrong; not otherwise obnoxious; has but little influence."<sup>10</sup>

As Christmas drew nearer, renewed efforts were made to obtain the release of the Maryland men in Fort Warren. On December 20, Francis Thomas, former Governor and the Congressman from Western Maryland, wrote General Dix on behalf of Claggett and his colleague, Salmon. Thomas pointed out the willingness of both gentlemen to take an oath of allegiance and added that Claggett had refused to go to Frederick to meet with the Legislature and was arrested at home. General Dix concurred in recommending freedom for the two men and forwarded the letter to Seward on the 21st.<sup>11</sup> Claggett was offered his discharge early in January, on condition that he take the required oath, but he refused liberty on such terms.<sup>12</sup>

The situation remained the same, then, when on January 22, 1862, Dr. Maddox wrote Reverdy Johnson, former United States Senator and former Attorney General, and at the time a member of Maryland's House of Delegates.

He [Claggett] is a quiet, peaceable citizen; [said Maddox], a sober, upright, honest citizen who has had but little to [do] with politics. He is a Protestant, an old Whig and has therefore had but little to do with Governor Lowe.<sup>13</sup> He has been a vestryman for many years, a church member, a Sunday-school teacher; was always fond of children; and often amuses himself at the trickery and criminations of politicians. He is not the man for plots and treason, for conspiracy and rebellion.<sup>14</sup>

Two days later, January 24, the incumbent delegates from Frederick County in the Maryland Legislature issued a joint statement

<sup>9</sup> Whittingham to Maddox, November 22, 1861, Maddox letters.

<sup>10</sup> *O.R.*, *op. cit.*, p. 713. November 27, 1861.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 720-21. Salmon was discharged on December 27 after taking the required oath, and the third Frederick County arrestee, Kessler, had left Fort Warren on the 20th. [Lawrence Sangston], *The Bastiles of the North* (Baltimore, 1863), pp. 117, 121.

<sup>12</sup> *O.R.*, *op. cit.*, p. 673.

<sup>13</sup> Enoch Louis Lowe (1820-92) had served as Governor of Maryland during 1851-54. He was a strong advocate of secession and was bitter in his denunciation of Governor Hick's pro-Union activities. In 1862 he was living in exile in Georgia.

<sup>14</sup> *O.R.*, *op. cit.*, p. 732.

that they regarded Claggett "as a harmless, peaceable and respectable citizen" and that his release would be "very acceptable" to them and to the people of Frederick County generally.<sup>15</sup> Both Maddox's letter and this declaration were sent by Johnson to Seward, and on February 10 the Secretary of State wrote Johnson that some Maryland prisoners had declined the oath of allegiance under a misapprehension that it would bind them to render active support to the United States Government, but that the oath had been modified and would be re-offered to them.<sup>16</sup>

Claggett's further reaction to his case and to the conditions in Fort Warren was described in a second, undated letter to Dr. Maddox, containing some colorful passages:

... Having no tolerable excuse to offer for my unkind neglect I shall not attempt a lame one. To be sure not having the ability to concentrate my mind enough to write in a noisy crowded room, I find it very difficult to correspond at all. We have eight in one room, where we sit, sleep, read and write, play whist, play the Guitar & fiddle, sing Dixie, sing the Star Spangled banner, dance, sing hymns, study the lives of the saints and the character of the martyrs, (as one of my room mates is now doing) and have a great time generally. If I had known in time that the government intended to immortalize me thus; I should have tried to educate myself up to the position, but it is too late now. My early training will prevent me from ever enjoying a life in the Forts.

This place would be very interesting to you for a short time. There are so many people to *talk to* and so many things to talk about. We have men of all kinds of genius and from all kinds of places. One of my room mates is from Canada (Lord Lyons is attending to his case), another from the far south who altho he speaks Spanish french and English never saw its shore except here [*sic*]. I am in earnest in saying that by way of variety you might spend a week or two here quite pleasantly. There are some very knowing people here and you could get more out of them in a week than I could in a month. If you are inclined to try it just go to that liberal and enlightened City of Frederick and sing Dixie. They will suspect you of being a suspicious character (That is the whole thing against me I believe) and will send you here with a military escort and all the honors of war. When you get tired, you can swear that you are a nice man and go home at your own expense.

You say that the Camanchee Indians claim that their native born citizens owe allegiance to their government. I say so too. I owe a native allegiance to my country more sacred and binding than any naturalization oath can

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 733.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 737. On February 14, Col. J. Dimick, commanding at Fort Warren, reported to Seward that Claggett declined to take the oath of allegiance. *Ibid.*, p. 738.

make. I say distinctly, that in my case that allegiance has not been violated. I do not believe that the Camanchee's take up their citizens without an accusation and without accuser and send them to far distant prisons permitting them to be charged with all kinds of rascality and giving them no opportunity to face the accuser and disprove his charges. Be pleased to recollect the 25th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles latter part. Commend me to the heathen Festus and to the Camanchee Indians. . . .<sup>17</sup>

Spring was in the air, in Maryland if not at Fort Warren, when Claggett wrote his brother-in-law at length concerning his puzzlement as to what steps to take:

Fort Warren March 6th

My dear Sir

I received your kind letter of the 28th. I owe you many apologies for my neglect to answer your letter and acknowledge the debt I owe you for the trouble you have taken and sympathy shown for my self and family. But really I have been in such a strange position that I never could make up my mind what to ask you to do.

Until recently, I knew that no one could be released from here however good his case or influential his friends without taking an oath. I had already taken an oath to support the Constitution and laws of the United States which I had not violated or intended to violate. I did not wish to give countenance to the imputation that I had done so either by taking an oath (which other citizens of Maryland were not required to take) or in any other way. To the parole now offered I have less objection, tho I consider it wrong to require that of me.

You say that a discharge or parole is the highest compliment government can pay a real or supposed enemy in time of war. Now that is the very thing I complain of, that the government should treat me as an enemy at all. That it should hold me up as a traitor, confine me for six months in a Bastille and then on the 22nd of February perform a work of supererogation and forgive me when there is nothing to forgive. I do not like the idea that innocent and guilty should all be thrown together publicly accused and released on the same terms. However I am exceedingly anxious to be at home and I suppose I shall have to take the best terms I can get. You perceive from the papers that several of the influential members of legislature have gone out on parole. It was offered to others here who declined to do so. I supposed from the order of the war department that it would be offered to all who were not considered too important and dangerous to be released. If that is the charge against me, the worst part of it is, that it cant be proved at home where I am known. I do not know why it has not been offered to me. The new commissioners will probably have the matter in hand and attend to it. I hear they are to be in New

<sup>17</sup> MS., Maddox letters. Acts 25 tells the story of Festus bringing Paul before King Agrippa at Caesarea and speaking on the case. Verse 27 reads (King James version): "For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."

York and will probably come here. I do not think you could do any thing by going to Washington now. The matter I suppose is in the hands of Genl. Dix and his colleagues. You might write to Genl Dix and find out what charges are against me and what he intends doing in the matter. I wrote to the Secretary of War some days since stating my case and saying that I thot I ought to have an unconditional release. I suppose he has his hands full just now. It is possible in a short time we will hear from Genl Dix;

An order from the Secretary of State would admit you into Fort Warren for about an hour and a half where you could see me in the Commanders room in presence of an officer. You would not be allowed to stay longer. For such a visit it would hardly pay you to take the trip. . . .

Yours truly

Thos Jno Claggett <sup>18</sup>

Apparently, Claggett's sister was becoming weary of the entire affair and wanted her brother back with her. In February she had written Dr. Maddox, "I have been begging Mr C to let his friends try if they could do something in the matter; but he has always looked upon the whole of it as being so unjust, that he did not seem to care about troubling his friends."<sup>19</sup> Now, on March 14, she relayed further word from the prisoner:

I received a letter from mr. Claggett yesterday and enclose it to you to day. You will see that he is willing to accept the parole if offered. Why it was not offered him I can't conceive. . . . There is no other chance for Mr. Claggett's getting home now I reckon but his accepting the Parole if offered, which I think any of them might accept. The greatest difficulty I see is how he can get the Parole offered him.<sup>20</sup>

Early in March, the Government issued an order which provided for the release on parole of those political prisoners who had refused to take an oath of allegiance. On March 29, General Dix and Edwards Pierrepont, acting as commissioners to deal with state prisoners, ordered the release of Claggett and others when they gave written parole to render no aid or comfort to enemies of the United States.<sup>21</sup> It was under this directive that Thomas Claggett ended his six-months' incarceration. It may be assumed that he returned to his farm at Petersville and to the company of his family and friends.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Ann P. Claggett to Maddox, February 21, 1862, Maddox letters.

<sup>20</sup> MS., Maddox letters.

<sup>21</sup> *O.R., op. cit.*, p. 744.

## A NEW YORKER IN MARYLAND: 1793 AND 1821<sup>1</sup>

JAMES KENT (1763-1847) is known to generations of lawyers for his *Commentaries on American Law*.<sup>2</sup> A graduate of Yale College in 1781, Kent practiced law in New York after the Revolution. He was an unsuccessful candidate for Congress in 1792 and later served three terms in the New York state assembly. Columbia College appointed him its first professor of law. His service on the bench culminated in his appointment as chancellor of the New York Court of Chancery. After his compulsory retirement in 1823 at the age of 60, Chancellor Kent wrote the volumes that are the chief basis of his fame.

Not long after his unsuccessful candidacy to Congress, Kent was employed by James Greenleaf, a speculator in Washington, D. C. real estate, to make a trip to the capitol city. The journal he kept of the trip made between December 5, 1793, and January 3, 1794, records vividly the young man's impressions of what he saw and heard. Travelling by public stage, Kent and his

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript journals from which these extracts were taken are in the James Kent Papers in the Library of Congress. A microfilm copy of the journals covering these trips is now available in the Library of the Maryland Historical Society. Our attention was drawn to these journals by an article by Frederick R. Goff, "The Federal City in 1793," *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, 9 (1951-1952), 3-8. Mr. Goff describes the recent gift from Mr. Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., of Tobias Lear's pamphlet, *Observations on the River Potomack* (New York, 1793), in which Kent had written his impressions of Georgetown.

In the extracts here printed raised letters have been brought down to the line, script S's have been eliminated, and periods, commas, or other punctuation marks have been substituted where deemed necessary for many of the dashes found in the manuscript.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Elizabeth Merritt, Marion Brewington, William B. Marye, James W. Foster, Francis C. Haber, Edith Rossiter Bevan, and Catherine M. Shelley who have substantially assisted in the preparation of these materials for publication.—EDITOR.

<sup>2</sup> (4 vols., 1826-1830). Six editions were published during Kent's life and eight subsequently. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, X, 344-347.

companions<sup>3</sup> stopped in Philadelphia and attended a levee held by President George Washington.<sup>4</sup> They also

visited the celebrated Museum of *Peal*. The principal *live* Curiosities were a Baboon & Monkey, a white Owl, a white-headed eagle, a Hawk, a Rattlesnake, & a Cow with 5 Legs.<sup>5</sup> I was much pleased with his interesting Collection of Portrait Paintings of the 1st Congress in 1774, & of several Generals in our late Army.

The portion of Kent's journal (or Memorandum, as he called it) describing Maryland is printed on the following pages. It will be noted that he expressed a desire to return to New York by way of Frederick, Lancaster, and York for "this would have given me a View of the finest Inland Country in America." This he could not do, but nearly three decades later (in 1821) he had the opportunity. On this occasion he took his daughter, Eliza Kent Hone, to Washington, returning through Western Maryland. Though brief, this account gives a welcome description of parts of Montgomery, Frederick, and Carroll counties.

I. Christiana, Delaware, to Washington, D. C., and Return: 1793.

Chrystine is 3 Miles S. of this Village [Stanton]. [It] Is much larger, & quite snug, [and] lies in a Vale with good lowlands & mills on *Christiana-Creek*, where Sloops come & the Tide. This is the same Creek that flows to Stanton & S. of Wilmington. From here we bid adieu even to the tributary streams of the Delaware, & bend our Course S. W. to the Head of Elk. Here we also bid adieu to good Roads, & good Soil for the Country from here quite down to the Potowmac is thin, & the Roads in general thro Maryland shamefully neglected. from Newport to

*Elkton* a pleasant & neat looking Town at the Head of Elk River in Maryland is 18 miles as the old Post Road runs, but 16 as the new *Turnpike* Road from Elkton is to go. This Road is already cut for 3 Miles E. of the Town on a straight line towards Chrystine, is very wide & spacious, paved [?] in the center & with Ditches on the Sides. This Village is called 49 Miles from Phil[adelphia]. The 2 forks of Elk River join here. Sloops come up, & the Tide rises 7 or 8 feet. From this place down to the Chesapeak is 20 Miles, & is called Elk River tho it resembles a Bay. Howe landed some Miles below the Village in 1777 as Ships cannot come within several Miles.<sup>6</sup> There are no less than 4 places

<sup>3</sup> Greenleaf and "Mr. Charles Lagarenne a French Gentleman."

<sup>4</sup> The description of the levee is printed in Goff, *op. cit.*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> See Charles Coleman Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale* (1939-1947), I, 5, 252 ff.; II, 23, *passim*. The five-legged cow, gift of a Maryland patron, was taken to Philadelphia by Peale after one of his painting trips. She was afterwards stuffed and mounted—giving milk to a two-headed calf! Sellers to editor, February 27, 1952.

<sup>6</sup> Sir William Howe. See J. T. Scharf, *History of Maryland* (1879), II, 310-319, and George Johnston, *History of Cecil County* (1881), pp. 327-336.



proposed as Canals to join Chesapeak & Delaware & 3 of them on Elk River below Elkton. Some of them are proposed to join Christiana Creek. There is a very neat 2 story brick Court House here, this being a County Town & within 3 Miles of Delaware State. This Town stands on a plain considerably elevated above the low marshy Borders of the 2 Rivers. From here to

*North-East* is 7 Miles; poor hilly Country; Iron Works frequent—one at N. E. rents for £750 Ml. annually. The N. E. a little River runs into a Bay here called N. E. Bay into which the Tide flows. There is here no appearance of a Town. In riding thro Delaware we seem to be in Connecticut from the cultivated & settled appearance of the Towns & Country, but from Elkton quite to George-Town as the Post Road goes, the Country is with few exceptions poor, hilly & thinly settled.

*Charleston* is 3 Miles from N. E. in a S. W. Course. Here you are at the head of the Chesapeak, & have a very wide View for 30 Miles down, & can see on the E. Where the Elk & N. E. Rivers come in, & on the W. where the Susquehannah empties. This place must be very pleasant in Summers, but it consists only of poor fishing Huts, & looks in wretched decay & Soil & Houses bear every aspect of Poverty & Ruin. It is however one of the greatest *herring* fishery places in the U. S., & 2,000 Waggonss are loaded annually in the Spring with the fish, & transport them into all the back Country.<sup>7</sup> From here to the

*Mouth of the Susquehannah* is 6 Miles making 65 Miles from Phil. When you come within a Mile of the River, you perceive a great & sudden alteration in the Soil. It becomes level & rich, & the Timber tall & good. This River is here 1 Mile wide; the Tide rises, but it is too shallow for a Harbor. a View up the River as we cross the ferry is very romantic, an Island is just above, & the Banks are steep & rugged. It resembles very much a View up the Hudson from Poughkeepsie. This River is navigable for 6 Miles up with small Craft, & then is interrupted by Rapids. The fall in 1 Mile some say 10 others 40 feet. It is several Years since attempts have been made to open these falls by Locks. a canal is partly finished. Some say £500, others £25,000 will be requisite to complete the Canal & Locks, & open this River here. The next Obstruction in this River is above Wrights' Ferry in Penn. but easily removed, & then the River is navigable to the Source. Was this River open, the Produce could come down, & then enter this canal contemplated by Maryland between the Chesapeak & Delaware, & which need not be above 12 Miles long & proceed to Phil. There is no good Harbor at Havre de Grace or that would be a great place when the Susquehannah is cleared. Produce would probably go to Anapolis as that is more handy & a better Harbor than Baltimore. On my Return from George-Town the latter End of December I was detained two Days at this Ferry. The Ice prohibited a Passage.

*Havre de Grace* is a very pleasantly situated little Village of decent 2 Story brick Houses on the W. Side of the Susquehannah. The place

<sup>7</sup> See Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 472-475.

commands a very extensive View into the Chesapeak, & the Hills back of the Ferry on each Side such as Mount Felix & Mount Pleasant<sup>8</sup> wh are decorated with handsome Country Seats. The good Land & fine Scenery about the Mouth of this River form a very striking & pleasant Contrast to the dreary & barren Country between that & Elkton.

*Harford* or Bush Town so called from a little Creek of that Name into which the Tide comes as far as this place is 12 Miles W. of the River. This small Village is in a Vale. The Land for the first 6 or 8 Miles from the Ferry is excellent, being level, well timbered & cultivated. It yields 15 or 20 Bushels of wheat an acre, but is worn out. good and comfortable farms appear along the Road. a little W. of Harford on a very commanding Hill is a small Village & a College called Abingdon College founded in 1785 by the Methodists.<sup>9</sup> The Building is 3 Story, of Brick, an unfinished Balcony in the Middle, 12 large Windows in Front, in each Story— & perhaps 120 feet long. The Methodists sent to England for a President, but could git no methodist Principal. an Episcopal Clergyman has now the Superintendency.<sup>10</sup> There have been upwards of 80 Scholars, but I am told the Seminary is decaying. Mr. Morse has given a humorous account in his Geography of the rigid & austere discipline in the College.<sup>11</sup>

*Baltimore* is 25 Miles westward of Harford being 37 from the Ferry, & including that, is 103 Miles from Philadelphia. The *red Lion Tavern* is  $\frac{1}{2}$  way between, the whole Country is poor, iron Soil, full of small Timber, & very sparcely settled.<sup>12</sup> I scarcely know a poorer or more univiting Country than from the Head of Elk to George-Town. The Land round

<sup>8</sup> "Mount Pleasant," built in 1757, was once the summer home of William Paca.

<sup>9</sup> The name of the College at Abingdon was Cokesbury, derived from the names of the first two Methodist bishops, Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. The first Methodist college in the world, Cokesbury was in existence from 1785 to 1796. An attempt to revive the College in Baltimore after the fire in Abingdon in 1795 was unsuccessful. See G. W. Archer, *Authentic History of Cokesbury College* (1894), and B. C. Steiner, *History of Education in Maryland* (1894), pp. 229-245.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Jacob Hall (1747-1812) served as president of the College from 1788 to 1794. See J. Hall Pleasants, "Jacob Hall, Surgeon and Educator, 1747-1812," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, VIII (1913), 223-230.

<sup>11</sup> Kent undoubtedly refers to the following paragraph in Jedidiah Morse, *American Universal Geography* (3rd ed., Boston, 1796), I, 592: "The students have regular hours for rising, for prayers, for their meals, for study, and for recreation. They are all to be in bed precisely at nine o'clock. Their recreation (for they are to be 'indulged in nothing which the world calls play'), are gardening, walking, riding and bathing without doors; and within doors, the carpenters, joiners, cabinet-makers or turners' business. Suitable provision is made for these several occupations, which are to be considered, not as matters of drudgery and constraint, but as pleasing and healthful recreations, both for the body and mind. Another of their rules, which though new and singular, is favourable to the health and vigour of the body and mind, is, that the students shall not sleep on feather beds, but on mattresses, and each one by himself. Particular attention is paid to the morals and religion of the students."

<sup>12</sup> On the main road to Philadelphia the Red Lion Inn was 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Baltimore and is believed to have been built about 1760. Clement Skerrett advertised the reopening of the tavern in the *Maryland Journal* (Baltimore), November 12, 1784, p. 4.

Baltimore is naked & barren. This Town is surrounded with Hills on the E. & N., & embraces a Bason into which the Water at common Tides is 5 or 6 feet deep. The Town is therefore only accessible by small craft. large Ships come up to *Fell's Point* about a Mile below the Town, & between which & the Town is a creek with 2 Bridges over it, & Houses are scattered all the way. The Bridge at the E. End of Market Street<sup>13</sup> is wooden, & has one Arch. In other respects it is very inelegant. The other Bridge is of Stone. The Situation of the Town is low & murky, & was formerly unhealthy. Patapso [*sic*] River empties into the Bason on which Baltimore stands. The Entrance into Baltimore Harbor, about 1 Mile below Fell's Point is hardly pistol-Shot across, & may easily be defended. Baltimore has had the most rapid growth of any Town in the U. S. It was truly a hot Bed growth, & owing to enterprizing Capitalists. Howe's going to Phil. in 1777 likewise diverted the back Trade to Baltimore. The Sickness in Phil. this last Fall has done the same,<sup>14</sup> & Baltimore this Season will nearly rival Phil. in the export of wheat & Flour. This Town is built chiefly of brick. Its Houses are 3 Story-join[ed] together-are wide, & the Town appears to be better and more handsomely built than Phil. In 1760 there were not 10 brick Houses, whereas in 1787 It had 2000 Houses in the whole of which 800 were at Fell's Point, & had also 152 Stores. It has grown rapidly since, & has now perhaps 13,000 Souls. It is larger than Charlestown, but does not yet equal Boston either in Trade or Numbers, but Boston is stationary. The fine & growing commercial Towns around it clipp its' wings, & Boston is not larger now than it was 40 Years ago. In 1760 Baltimore was 10 times inferior to Anapolis, & was a paltry Village. From 1770 it took a Spring, & grew 100 fold in 1774. But it had not then more Prosperity than George-Town has now. It is now 10 times larger than Anapolis which is 30 Miles below it, & is the Seat of Government. But Anapolis has large & elegant Houses & is said to be the wealthiest Town of its Size in American & contains 260 Houses, & is planned like a circle with the Streets like radii beginning at a center where its noble Building the Stadt House stands, & diverging in every direction. Baltimore is not incorporated. It has a State-Bank & the Branch Bank here also & both full of Business.<sup>15</sup> It has the most elegant dancing Assembly Room in the U. S.<sup>16</sup> It is a 2 Story brick Building very long, & has a very elegant Appearance in Front. There are two Turnpike Roads which lead back of Baltimore upwards of 20 Miles to the End of the County. They contemplate one to Lancaster which is 80 Miles up, but it is only carried to the End of Baltimore County. They have no Tolls upon them, for they

<sup>13</sup> Now Baltimore Street.

<sup>14</sup> The yellow fever plague of 1793.

<sup>15</sup> The Bank of Maryland, established in 1784, was located on South Street near Lovely Lane (Redmond) Street. The Branch Bank of the Bank of the United States, established in Baltimore in 1792, was located at Gay and Second streets.

<sup>16</sup> "The Assembly Room Stands at the North-east corner of East [Fayette] and Holliday streets, and has perhaps the most elegant exterior of any building in the City; in one room of which is now kept the City Library [Library Company of Baltimore] consisting of an extensive collection of books in ancient and modern literature." *Baltimore Directory*, 1800-1801, p. 22.

were built at the expence of the County. They are raised in the Center, with ditches on the Side. But not being gravelled or paved the narrow waggon Wheels cut them very much.

The Staples of Maryland are Wheat & Tobacco. It exported last Year more than NYork, tho the weight of Tonnage was less. This serves to give us some Idea of Baltimore Trade & the resources of the back Country. a considerable French Fleet lay at Fell's Point, & there were in the Town 1100 French.<sup>17</sup> These are the wretched Fugitives from the melancholy Ruins of the *Cape*. markets have rose in Baltimore 50 per cent since July when they came. Wood was now 50/. a cord, & House Rents very high.

Market Street is the principal Street. It runs perfectly straight, nearly E. & W. It is a Mile in length, & bounded on the E. by the wooden Bridge I have noted. It resembles the main Street in Hudson;<sup>18</sup> at the W. End of it & nearly at right angles with it, is a very spacious Street<sup>18a</sup> laid out resembling Broadway in NY. This comes from the Country & descends gradually down to the W. End of the Town. The Streets are all neatly paved. a number of handsome, & well built cross Streets run across Market Street from the Hill on the N. down to the Stores & Wharfs. Tho the Houses are generally newer & more handsome than in Phil. they all have the same defect in wooden Roofs, & besides here they want numbering. The two main Streets at Fell's Point were also paved. In other respects that Point was muddy & low, & so were the warfs & Stores in Town.

There are 9 public Churches here, but only 4 of them attract Attention. These are all of brick, & without Steeples except the one at the W. End of the Town.<sup>19</sup> There is a delightful View of the Town & Harbor on the Heights N. of the Town, & some of them have handsome Country Seats. an episcopal Church stands on the Hill, & commands a noble Prospect.<sup>20</sup> It is a very neat 2 Story brick Building with a Steeple. It is surrounded by a large graveyard, with plenty of rich marble Tombs. a Presby. Church<sup>21</sup> is partly finished a little E. of it, & has 2 Steeples, one on each Side with a Front like St. Paul's Church at NY. & large Pillars supporting a Frontispiece & Roof above. The Market is in one of the cross Streets, is built of Brick, & is as long as the Fly Market at NY. They have another 4

<sup>17</sup> Contemporary newspapers have numerous references to the stream of vessels that came to Baltimore following the massacre at the French colony at Cape Francois, Haiti. See for instance the *Maryland Journal* (Baltimore), July 9, p. 3, July 12, p. 2, July 16, p. 3, and July 23, p. 2. The July 12 account reports that a committee was "appointed to examine the Situation of the French Fleet arrived in this Harbour, and ascertain the Number of Passengers and the Relief necessary to be given them."

<sup>18</sup> A town on the east side of the Hudson River about half way between Poughkeepsie and Albany.

<sup>18a</sup> Presumably Howard Street.

<sup>19</sup> Probably the German Reformed Church, Sharpe and Conway streets. The congregation subsequently moved to the present (Otterbein) church structure.

<sup>20</sup> The second St. Paul's building, erected between 1780 and 1784, was located at Charles and Saratoga.

<sup>21</sup> The second building of the First Presbyterian Church, known as the Two Steeple Church and erected between 1789 and 1791, stood on the corner of Fayette and North (Guilford) streets.

square market at the S.W. end of the Town with an open area in the center. The Court-House was near the Top of the Hill in one of the descending cross Streets, & originally 2 Stories with a small Steeple, but the Hill has been so dug away, as that a basement Story with an open arch under it, has since been added.<sup>22</sup> This throws the House (originally small) high in the Air, & destroys all Proportion. It has as bad an appearance as a Man on Stilts. Market Street is gently descending from the W. The cross Streets descends faster. They are all on a streight line, & generally sufficiently wide. The Stores are all of brick, & are very neat. Indeed the Town looks, new, elegant & prosperous in every part. It is 200 Miles from the Sea, & is principally fed now by the W. & S.W. which must all go to Washington, when the Potowmac is opened, & capitalists settle there. Neither the Situation of the Harbor, or of the Country round it, would naturally have led one to fix on Baltimore as a great Mart of Commerce. I think it must be now to its *ne plus ultra* in commercial Prosperity.

The day before I left NYork a Snow fell upwards of 1 foot. It began several Hours before at Baltimore & fell 2 feet on a level; at George-Town it fell 3 feet on a level.

*George-Town* is 45 Miles in a S.W. direction from Baltimore. Patapso River & Ferry is 8 Miles W. as the Post Road goes. Tide swells up to the Ferry. It is assisted by a Rope. *Elkridge Landing* is a paltry Village the W. Side of the Ferry. A Stone may be hove over the Ferry. The Land thro this Country is poor—poorly cultivated, sparcely settled, & most part small woods. a great deal of Iron ore is concealed in the ground; about  $\frac{1}{2}$  way between Baltimore & George-Town there is the Snowden's famous Iron Works owned by 2 Brothers who have handsome Houses on the adjoining Hills.<sup>23</sup> This place seems to relieve the Traveller in this uninviting Country. *Bladensburg* is a pretty Village 8 Miles from George-Town, & at the Head of the Eastern Branch. Lowndes has a very elegant Seat on a Hill W. of the Town.<sup>24</sup> This Place is low, well watered by the Stream forming the head of the Eastern Branch. The Land looks good, & I am told one Merchant here last year shipped from different Places 12,000 HH. of Tobacco. There is a Spring of mineral Waters here close on the Bank of the River, of which I tasted. It is strangely impregnated with Iron Oar thro which it must flow. From this Village to George-Town the Road is very hilly. Altho the Land around Anapolis is thin, yet I am told that on this rout to George-Town, & between it & Anapolis, there is a Tract of as fine low land as any in the State.

As I have pretty fully described the result of my Visit to George-Town,

<sup>22</sup> The Court House was erected on the present site of the Battle Monument soon after 1768 when Baltimore became the county seat. By "the ingenuity of Mr. Leonard Harbaugh (afterwards a town commissioner), it was, in 1784, underpinned and arched and the street [Calvert] opened." A photograph of a painting recently acquired by the Society and showing the Court House and other buildings seen by Kent is reproduced in *Maryland Historical Notes* for February, 1951.

<sup>23</sup> Probably "Montpelier," built by Thomas Snowden, and "Oakland," built by Richard Snowden, his brother.

<sup>24</sup> Bostic or Bostwick Hall, near Bladensburg.



the City of Washington & Alexandria in *Notes* <sup>25</sup> to Mr. Lear's Pamphlet on the Potowmac, <sup>26</sup> & to which I refer, I conclude this Memorandum with some

*Miscellanea*

I tarried at Baltimore 1 day, & at George-Town 9 Days. While there I dined with Col. Forrest, <sup>27</sup> Mr. Stodderd, <sup>28</sup> Young Mr. Mason <sup>29</sup> & Mr. Notely Young. <sup>30</sup> The Society at George-Town is very polite. at Mr. Young's which is on the River in the federal City, we see down as far as Mount Vernon. The 3 commissioners of the federal District are Thomas Johnson <sup>31</sup> (late Gov. & Judge) David Stuart <sup>32</sup> & Daniel Carroll. <sup>33</sup> They are accused by some as being very injudicious in their Plans, & incompetent to the Task. They alledge the building of the bad Bridge & expensive causeway over Rock-Creek, the cutting of canals before the City is begun &c. & the low ebb of its credit & Prospect when Mr. Greenleaf made his first purchase last Sep. as evidences of their Assertions. Their sales to Mr. Greenleaf & Morris <sup>34</sup> however have made a total Alteration in Affairs.

On Christmas Eve there was great firing at George Town all night. I observed the same to a degree in Phil. on New Years Eve.

\* \* \* \* \*

At Alexandria I saw a live male & female *Bison*. He was very gentle & was 3 feet 8 inches thro the Breast.

It was my Intention to have returned by the way of *Fredericktown* <sup>35</sup> *York & Lancaster*. This would have given me a View of the finest Inland Country in America. Frederick-Town had 5 Years ago upwards of 300 Houses principally of brick & Stone, & is in the midst of fine Land W. of Monocasy River, & within 2 Miles of it. It is several Miles E. of the blue Ridge called the *North-Mountain* the N. of the Potowmac.

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<sup>25</sup> Goff, *op. cit.*, 3-8.

<sup>26</sup> Tobias Lear, *Observations on the River Potomack* (New York, 1793).

<sup>27</sup> Uriah Forrest (1756-1805), of St. Mary's County, an officer in the Revolutionary Army and a member of the Continental and U. S. Congress.

<sup>28</sup> Benjamin Stodderd (1751-1813), of Charles County, an officer in the Revolutionary Army, a Georgetown merchant, and first Secretary of the Navy, speculated heavily in District of Columbia real estate with Forrest and others.

<sup>29</sup> Probably Stevens Thomson Mason (1760-1803), Senator from Virginia from 1794 until his death.

<sup>30</sup> Notley Young (d. 1802), a speculator in Washington real estate, and a director of the Bank of Columbia at the time of his death. An obituary is found in the *Federal Gazette* (Baltimore), March 26, 1802.

<sup>31</sup> (1732-1819). See E. S. Delaplaine, *Life of Thomas Johnson* (1927), pp. 470-473.

<sup>32</sup> Dr. David Stuart, of Fairfax County, the Virginia representative on the board of commissioners.

<sup>33</sup> (1730-1796), a Maryland signer of the Constitution of the United States.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Morris (1734-1806). A. C. Clark, *Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City* (1901) and W. B. Bryan, *History of the National Capitol* (1914-1916) detail the operations of Greenleaf and Morris.

<sup>35</sup> Frederick.



This Journey tho performed in the month of December was highly agreeable & comfortable. I travelled in the public Stages, & found the Stages & Stage-Houses in good accomodation. I shall ever remember with pleasure the intimate Introduction it has given me to the knowledge of some of the Southern States, & particularly of the *Potowmac* Country which has a City so admirable in the Plan, & noble in the object, beginning to discover the marks of Industry, genius & Freedom, & to rear itself on its Banks.

## II. Philadelphia to Washington, Rockville, Frederick, Taneytown, and Hanover, Pennsylvania: 1821.

[May 17] . . . entered on Board a Steam Boat for *Newcastle* in delaware, & passed along side of the tremendous Ship of the Line *North-Carolina*,<sup>36</sup> & passed by the elegant works or Fort on an Island on the W. Shore & nearly opposite Red Bank. We landed at *New Castle* 30 Miles down the Delaware by 5 O'clock when the Sun came out bright. It is a little insignificant Village. We got into a Post Coach (& several were here for Passengers) & rode S.W. 15 Miles to *French Town* on Elk River, & two Miles below Elktown. We admired the Thorn Hedge fences, & richly cultivated fields of grass, Rye & corn after leaving New Castle. We took the *Steam Boat* at French Town by Sundown & she immediately started for Baltimore. We supped & went to Bed, & arrived before day at the dock at *Baltimore*. It rained very hard in the Night, but we did not perceive it, & we lost all the wide Prospects on the Chesapeake Bay.

Friday May 18th a beautiful morning. Eliza [his daughter] & I were in a Hack very early & went up & visited the new Exchange,<sup>37</sup> & went up to the Cupola or Dome, & had a magnificent Bird's Eye View of *Baltimore* & the Harbor. We then went to view the cool & capicious & solubrious City Spring,<sup>38</sup> & Washington's Monument,<sup>39</sup> & breakfasted at the *Indian Queen* kept by Barnum.<sup>40</sup> Here we saw Ch. Mitchell Esq.<sup>41</sup> & at 9 O'clock we got into the Post Coach for Washington. The day was hot & we were rather crowded & fatigued. The road is very dull. At *Bladensburg* we were shown the Ground of the Battle in August 1814 when General Ross<sup>42</sup> took the City of W., & we were shown the Graves

<sup>36</sup> The first Navy vessel named for a state. A model of this vessel is a familiar sight in the Library of the Maryland Historical Society.

<sup>37</sup> A large structure in which were housed the offices of brokers, insurance companies, and for a time the offices of the municipal government. Construction of the building, designed by B. H. Latrobe, was begun in 1815. See *Picture of Baltimore* (1832) for detailed account and illustration.

<sup>38</sup> Near Calvert and Saratoga streets. *Picture of Baltimore*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>39</sup> Begun in 1815, the Washington Monument at Charles and Monument streets was completed in 1829. *Picture of Baltimore*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>40</sup> At Baltimore and Hanover streets, the *Indian Queen* was managed by David Barnum. *Picture of Baltimore*, p. 233.

<sup>41</sup> Undoubtedly Charles Mitchell (d. 1831), "witty, learned, profligate and accomplished lawyer of the Baltimore Bar," quotation from J. P. Kennedy's diary, June 11, 1831, Peabody Institute Library.

<sup>42</sup> General Robert Ross, who died while leading British troops against Baltimore, September 12, 1814.

of the numerous British Soliders who fell by our musquetry & Grape. We saw also the Ground on our left where duelists meet, & where *Decatur* fell.<sup>43</sup> The fatague of the Traveller is forgotten at once on opening as we did at 4 or 5 P. M. on the bright & brilliant Scenery on & from *Capitol Hill*. We hastily passed by the Capitol, & along the Pennsylvania avenue to *George Town*, & lodged at *Crawford's Hotel* where we were handsomely accomodated with a Parlor & Bedrooms.<sup>44</sup>

My daughter stood her great & constant Exercise wonderfully well, & was recruiting daily in Health & Bloom & appetite & Sleep.

Saturday May 19 a fine day. We rode around the Hills & Environs of Georgetown in the morning & then went over to the City & called on S. Thompson<sup>45</sup> the Secy. of the Navy, with whom & at his House we dined, & we inspected with him the Capitol & Navy Yard, & the curiosities in the Office of the Secy of State, such as the original Parchment containing the declaration of Independence &c. I also visited with Mr. Munro<sup>46</sup> the President of US. & I admired the chaste & severe Simplicity of his Palace built of Grey Stone, & the Grandeur of the Capitol & magnificance of the S. Wing containing the Room of the House of Representatives. The Navy Yard & its cannon in massy Rows, & its brilliantly neat Armory, & its Steam Saw-Mill & naval monument &c all excited my Attention.<sup>47</sup> The attentions of the Secy of the Navy & of his family were warm & kind. We ret'd in the Evening to our Hotel at Georges-Town which stand directly opposite to a new brick meeting House which was building.

Sunday May 20th we started in Post Coach by 3 Oclock in the morning for *Fredericktown*. It was cool & a bright Moon. We had a Mr. Smith a druggist of Philadelphia who had recently married a Miss Pearsall of NYork, with her Brother & his Sister in the Stage. The distance is say 45 Miles, & toward N.W. & very uninteresting. We passed by *Montgomery Court House* in a little Paltry Village<sup>48</sup> & crossed the Monocasey River & got a view of the W. ridge or continuation of the Blue ridge before we reached *Fredericktown*. It was a fine day & the Country grew flat & richly cultivated as we approached the Town. We arrived at 1 Oclock, & stayed at *Talbot's Hotel*,<sup>49</sup> which was crowded with idle young men of the Town in their Sunday dress. It is a large Town & has two long

<sup>43</sup> Commodore Stephen Decatur (1779-1820), was born on the Eastern Shore and had a distinguished naval career. He was fatally wounded in a duel with Captain James Barron.

<sup>44</sup> The Union Tavern, kept by Joseph Crawford, located at 30th and M Streets in Georgetown.

<sup>45</sup> Smith Thompson (1768-1843), of New York, Secretary of the Navy from 1819 to 1823 and an associate justice of the Supreme Court from the latter year until his death.

<sup>46</sup> James Monroe (1758-1831), of Virginia.

<sup>47</sup> The Navy Yard was established in 1799. An interesting contemporary description is found in D. B. Warden, *Description of the District of Columbia* (1816), pp. 62-68.

<sup>48</sup> Rockville.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Talbot's hotel. T. J. C. Williams, *History of Frederick County* (1910), I, 182-184, 210.

paved Streets of stone & brick Houses crossing each other at right angles. The compact Town has 3600 Souls, & 3 or 4 Churches. One is an Episcopal, one a Roman Catholic & one a Presbyterian Church.<sup>50</sup> The Town swarmed with well dressed Negroes on Sunday as being to them a gala Day. There are a few very neat & fashionable brick Houses & two of the Churches & the Court House & stone Goal are respectable Buildings.<sup>51</sup> This Town is surrounded by the richest of Meadows & flat lands covered with Grass & Grain; a Stream flows through the Town, & there is a beautiful view W. for a doz. Miles to the sloping sides of the Tame & graceful W. or *blue Ridge* covered with Woods.

Monday May 21st a beautiful day. Eliza & I started after Breakfast in a private Coachee for York in Pennsylvania which lies to the NE. a distance of 59 Miles. We rode that day to Hanover [Pennsylvania] a distance of 41 miles, through a flat & well cultivated agricultural country peopled principally with Germans. The West ridge of Mountains lay along on our left at the distance of from 8 to 16 Miles. It is of very moderate Elevation, & capable no doubt of Settlement & cultivation almost any where. We saw a white Building on its side which we were told was a Roman Catholic Monastery.<sup>52</sup> We dined at a little ugly Village called *Taney Town*. The Land Lady was a Catholic, & the little Brick Church of the German Lutherans.<sup>53</sup> We met with a very affable Landlord at the Village of Petersborough where a Turnpike crossed for Baltimore. *Hanover* where we lodged is a considerable Village with cross Streets as is usual in these German Towns, & the Court House is a small-very small Square or Space left at the Intersection of the Roads. We lodged at the Tavern of a very grave & honest looking German Landlord.

During the ride of this day Eliza & I were admiring the variety & Beauty of the Birds & Trees & fields of Grass & wheat & Rye &c, & we met frequently with heavy waggons with fine fat Horses to each as fat & large as so many hippopotami, & we admired the solidity of the Stone Bridges & Barns. If the Cellars were of Brick or wood, yet the Basement Story for the Cows &c. was uniformly of Stone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Saturday May 26th. [Five days later, from Brunswick, N. J.] We entered early in the morning on board of the Steam Boat *Bellona*. It rained torrents. We arrived at NY. by 11 O'clock & found our Friends well, & my daughter had wonderfully improved her Health by the Journey.

<sup>50</sup> All Saint's Episcopal, St. John's Catholic, and "English Presbyterian" churches. Williams, *op. cit.*, I, 427 ff.

<sup>51</sup> See article by Mr. Mathias, "Court Square, Frederick," pp. 110-120.

<sup>52</sup> The "Stone House" or "White House," first home of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph. A. M. Melville, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton* (1951), pp. 154-157, opp. 173.

<sup>53</sup> Is this the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church? See Scharf, *History of Western Maryland* (1882), II, 839-847, and "Historical Notes," *200th Anniversary Pageant and Souvenir Booklet* (1951).

## REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS

*Travels of a Frenchman in Maryland and Virginia with a Description of Philadelphia and Baltimore in 1791.* By FERDINAND-M. BAYARD. Translated and Edited by BEN C. McCARY. Williamsburg: 1950. xxvii, 182 pp. \$2.50.

Professor McCary had the excellent idea of presenting to the American public a translation of a little known and too seldom quoted travel relation which could bear a subtitle, indicated by the author himself, "domestic manners of the Americans," "mœurs des Américains et leurs habitudes domestiques." The translator has succeeded in preserving some of the French flavor by following the text literally and reproducing the amusing misspellings of proper names in the original, and he has resisted the temptation of rewriting in his footnotes the whole history of the period. Altogether he has given us a very readable little book, and I cannot too strongly recommend to those who will be able to obtain a copy to put it in their bag for reading during the summer. It is much to be regretted that Professor McCary, apparently unable to interest a commercial publisher, had only 325 copies "Lithoprinted by Edwards Brothers, Ann Arbor, Michigan."

As a document, Bayard's relation stands by itself among the travel accounts of the same period and presents a more vivid and personal picture of the life of the people of Virginia and Maryland at the end of the 18th century than any other relation written by a foreign observer of the American scene. The very little known of the author is reviewed by Professor McCary, who also describes the first (1797) and second (1798) editions that were published.

It was to escape "the unwholesome air of the city during the summer months," as well as to get better acquainted with the American people that, early in the summer of 1791, Bayard decided to take his wife and little child to the summer resort of Bath (Berkeley Springs, W. Va.). The family—accompanied by a Baltimore woman, Mrs. C . . y, who, although "the daughter of a tailor," had social aspirations and boasted of a maid—hired a carriage and a driver and proceeded to Frederick, then to Bath. Leaving his family at Bath, Bayard went alone on horseback to Winchester and explored the Shenandoah Valley, apparently without definite plan, relying on the well known hospitality of the farmers and planters.

His book consists essentially of the account of his trip to Bath and Winchester, his stay at Bath, short descriptions of Hagerstown and Baltimore, an even shorter description of Philadelphia, a rather long account

of the Indians he had seen in Philadelphia during the winter of 1791, a visit to the Falls of the Passaic, which may lead one to suppose that he went to New York, although no mention is made of the city.

His judgments and conclusions are exceedingly questionable. Most of them were added when, back in France, he yielded to a public opinion hostile to America and particularly to Washington. His discussion of the order of Cincinnati, and his translation of the spurious letters attributed to Washington add nothing to the value of the book. Bayard was not a philosopher, but he was a keen reporter, with an eye for small picturesque details which he noted sometimes with admiration, more often with an ironical touch. Occasionally, he stopped to look at the landscape, but was too often reminded of Ossian and even Milton to commune with the American "solitude," as his fellow countryman Chateaubriand was doing, at exactly the same time. But as a moral and social observer he is unparalleled. Where else could one find such a vivid picture of life in a summer resort on the fringe of the frontier, including gambling, and duelling, the ludicrous performances given by Irish itinerant players, the attempts of sentimental ladies to find an escape in literature, flirting and mixing social dissipations with prayer meetings and Methodist revivals? The account of travelling conditions was a commonplace at the time, but Bayard is not a disgruntled traveler. Eminently a social being, he wanted to find out what kind of a society the isolated farmers and planters had been able to set up in the wilderness, from the humblest establishment to the almost feudal life of the slave owner. Greedy innkeepers, farmer's wives who manage in a log house to look and even to dress like ladies and offer the traveler some milk in a delicate china cup imported from England, mountaineers who distill and drink their own whiskey, gentlemen fond of hunting and keeping a pack of hounds—those are the people Bayard has seen, with whom he has associated and with whom he spent long evenings discussing this strange American way of life, so different from the life of the cities. Among several others one may note particularly the detailed and precise picture of the plantation of a former aide de camp of Washington who spent part of the night recollecting for his visitors the first years of the Revolutionary war.

To a Maryland reader, Bayard's relation will be particularly precious. His account of Baltimore is not entirely flattering, but it deserves a place in the golden book of the city. Bayard's visit to the flour mill of the "Hellicot" family of Maryland and Virginia, his admiration for the inventive genius of the old Quakers, the labor saving machinery which enabled them to run the mill with a few workers, the farm of Mr. Caleb Dorsey at Elkridge constitute invaluable documents. Finally the delightful view, without the slightest Ossianic reminiscence, "from the top of the small hill on which is situated the house of Colonel Howard" should endear him to all the historians of Baltimore.

GILBERT CHINARD

*Princeton University*



*Elizabeth Bayley Seton, 1774-1821.* By ANNABELLE M. MELVILLE. New York: Scribner's, 1951. xvii, 411 pp. \$4.

Among the persons who have lent lustre to the Maryland scene none deserve to be better remembered than Elizabeth Bayley Seton, the saintly Foundress of the Sisters of Charity. Coming to Baltimore from New York in June, 1808, with her three daughters she spent a year in a house on Paca Street before departing for Emmitsburg where she was destined to establish a Society of nuns who would devote themselves to the good work of Christian charity and education among the people. It was a far cry from the elite society of New York and the company of friends and relatives she was compelled to abandon when she gave up her Episcopal religion to join the Catholic Church. Married to William Magee Seton in January, 1794, she had served him nobly as devoted wife and adoring mother to their five children until sickness brought about his ill fortune and death abroad in 1804. Thus it was in Italy she found solace and comfort in the friendship of the Filicchi family, merchants of Leghorn, whose kindly example first brought the Catholic Church to her attention.

Mrs. Melville writes this biography within the shadow of Mother Seton's first earthly triumph, St. Joseph's College at Emmitsburg. In every way it is a definitive study. Neither lavishing undue praise where not deserved nor, on the other hand, minimizing the immense hardships involved in setting up her Society in the wilderness of the Maryland frontier, at all times the story rings true. Indeed it is an excellent example of what might be called a new departure in hagiography—American style. For one day, God willing, Mother Seton is sure to be canonized and when that day will have come, the United States will have obtained its first truly American Saint. That this author has taken the pains to report so fully and so charmingly the saga of this gracious American woman is cause for Maryland and Baltimore to be especially grateful. This reviewer regrets, however, that the book contains no genealogical table. Its inclusion would have aided the reader to appreciate Mother Seton's connection with the Bayley, Carleton, Roosevelt, and Seton families whose scions have played so large a role in shaping American history. In a very special way Baltimore itself is a witness to the noble influence of this woman. Its eighth Archbishop, James Roosevelt Bayley (1872-1877) was her nephew. President Franklin Roosevelt himself once acknowledged to this reviewer the high esteem in which the memory of Mother Seton was held by his family.

HARRY W. KIRWIN

*Loyola College*



*Oakland, Garrett County, Maryland, Centennial History, 1849-1949.* By THEKLA FUNDENBERG WEEKS. Oakland: 1949. 103 pp.

This is another of the community historical souvenirs, a species which indicates a healthy amateur interest in history and develops perspective at the grass roots. Mrs. Weeks recounts the history of Maryland's western-most county seat, telling her story carefully and without nonsense. Primarily she addresses the people of Oakland, using a wealth of local reference. Several maps and nearly a hundred illustrations add interest. The author and the Oakland Centennial Commission both deserve commendation.

HENRY J. YOUNG

*Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission,  
Harrisburg*

*The First Presbyterian Church, Cumberland, Maryland, 1810-1950.* Compiled by RUTH A. CLAUSON and Mrs. P. G. ERWIN. [Cumberland, 1950. 38 pp.]

A surprising store of information has been gathered in the small space of this modest pamphlet. The history of the congregation and the Moffatt Memorial Mission at Barrelville has been agreeably sketched. A directory of officers and members in 1950 is included.

*200th Anniversary Pageant and Souvenir Booklet.* Taneytown, 1951. 24 pp.

This small pamphlet describes "The Seven Books of Trinity," a pageant that was a feature of the bicentennial celebration of the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Taneytown last year. There are 35 illustrations of scenes of the pageant, of the church and the parsonage as they looked in former days and as they now appear, and of past and present ministers of the church. The "Historical Notes" suggest the rich history of the congregation.

*Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Maryland.* By HAROLD I. LESSEM and GEORGE C. MACKENZIE. Washington: National Park Service, 1950. 38 pp. \$0.20

The history of Fort McHenry, from its modest beginning during the Revolutionary War, through its expansion prior to the War of 1812 and its important role during the Battle of Baltimore, and on through later wars, including World War II, is here recounted in some detail. Emphasis is placed, appropriately, on the War of 1812 and the writing of the Star

Spangled Banner. A brief description of the present-day fort and its museums is included.

The authors, who have been connected with the fort, write with apparent interest in their subject, and, although the language occasionally tends to be somewhat technical, especially in the descriptions of the British bombs and rockets and the fort today, the pamphlet is of the popular type.

Many illustrations add to its interest—reproductions of portraits of persons connected with the fort, especially during the War of 1812, old prints, photographs of the present fort (there might have been more of these), maps, diagrams, and the original manuscript draft and the first printing of the Star Spangled Banner.

The National Park Service has published several other pamphlets on the fort, but they have done well to make this fuller account available at such a nominal sum.

ELIZABETH C. LITSINGER

*Enoch Pratt Free Library*

*Story of the Easton Star-Democrat.* By JAMES C. MULLIKIN. Published by the newspaper. 88 pp.

This is a delightful history of the Eastern Shore's oldest weekly newspaper. It tells how Thomas Perrin Smith came to Easton from Virginia in 1799 without an idea in the world of starting a paper—until he discovered that the hated Federalists were publishing a weekly in the village. Completely without experience, he established *The Republican Star or Eastern Shore Luminary*. The opposition was soon out of business.

The subsequent history of the paper is a capsule history of American politics as well. Republican, Democratic, Whig, Democratic: over the 150 years that have seen its plant twice burned out and often near bankruptcy, it has been all these. Its editors have been printers, politicians, merchants; one was an actor. Thomas K. Robson, editor and owner from 1849 to 1888, was a newspaperman of the Horace Greeley school, and so violently "Secesh" that during the Civil War Federal troops, vexed by his constant attacks, picked him up bodily and deposited him within the Confederate lines.

The story of the paper—since 1896 the *Easton Star-Democrat*, since 1949 at home in one of the State's most modern printing plants—is thorough and well written with a light touch. It deserves a place on every shelf devoted to the history of Maryland journalism.

WILLIAM STUMP

*History of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of Maryland, 1888-1950.* By CARL N. EVERSTINE. Baltimore, 1951. 2 vol., 1,010 pp.

In the 1880s Edward T. Schultz published in four volumes the *History of Freemasonry in Maryland*, long the standard reference work on the subject. Mr. Everstine in his volumes summarizes the history of the first hundred years, then brings the story down through the first half of the 20th century. Careful, judicious, and always in understatement, the author has written an entirely satisfactory history of the Masons and their activities for the past 60 years. The appendices showing local lodges and Grand Masters since 1787 are valuable additions. Of value as a work of reference as well as a history, Mr. Everstine's volumes will stand as a Masonic landmark for a long time to come.

*A Tour Through Part of Virginia in the Summer of 1808.* By JOHN E. CALDWELL, Edited by WILLIAM M. E. RACHAL. Richmond: Dietz Press, 1951. xxi, 61 pp. \$2.

This is an interesting account of a New Yorker's trip from Baltimore to Old Sweet Springs via Frederick, Maryland, and the Shenandoah Valley; his visit to the other famed springs of the Virginias; and a call on President Jefferson at Monticello. The author, John Edwards Caldwell, had a cosmopolitan background, having spent a decade in France where he received a liberal education and lived in the home of the Marquis de Lafayette. Several years before his visit to Virginia he was the United States consular agent for Santo Domingo and ports of the West Indies, and subsequently he was characterized as "the most intelligent" Presbyterian layman.

Caldwell made brief comments on the inhabitants, tourists' accommodations and the chief points of interest of Ellicott's Mills, Harper's Ferry, Martinsburg, Winchester, Harrisonburg, Staunton, Lexington, Fincastle, Alexandria, Washington, and other places along his route. He was so awed by the Natural Bridge that he copied the description of this "sublime object" from Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* instead of trusting to his own descriptive powers. Caldwell's *Some Account of the Islands of the Azores* is a welcome addition to the book reviewed.

Everyone interested in Virginiana is indebted to Mr. William M. E. Rachal for his enlightening editor's notes, and to the Dietz Press for making available at a reasonable price a hitherto extremely scarce volume.

CARROL H. QUENZEL

Mary Washington College of the  
University of Virginia

*Old New Castle and Modern Delaware.* Washington, D. C.: 1951.- iv  
59 pp. \$1.

On June 1, 1951, in Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress, The Honorable J. Allen Frear, United States Senator from Delaware, presided at a meeting marking the formal opening of a special exhibit in the Library of Congress to commemorate the Tercentenary of the founding of New Castle, Delaware, by the Dutch. The principal address of the evening was that of Dr. John Munroe of the University of Delaware who ably traced the varied history of this old town. The remarkable exhibit of maps, documents, manuscripts, books and photographs showing many facets in the origin and development of New Castle were attractively arranged in a series of cases by Nelson R. Burr, Philip F. Bell, and Herbert J. Sanborn of the Library of Congress staff. In eight cases they portrayed the early life of New Castle through the colonial period, the Revolution and to the adoption of the Federal Constitution. With the use of panels containing illustrative material, they arranged their exhibit showing the homes of New Castle statesmen, the planned restoration of New Castle and modern Delaware depicting industry, agriculture, transportation, education, and recreation.

Never before has such a comprehensive collection of material pertaining to New Castle been brought together; and, although this well-written and attractively-printed and illustrated booklet is not a complete bibliography, it will surely stand for a long time as the best guide to illustrative material of the history of this old town.

LEON DEVALINGER, JR.

*Delaware State Archives*

*The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution.* By OLIVER M.  
DICKERSON. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1951. xv,  
344 pp. \$6.

According to Dickerson the American Revolution was caused by a basic failure in British policy—or, rather, change of policy—after 1763. His evidence is statistical, journalistic, and philosophical; its bulk and scope tremendous.

The lions of American historiography are attacked obliquely by a mass of statistical data supported by contemporary views, until, by a process of *reductio ad absurdum*, Van Tyne, Andrews, Schlesinger, and others are left holding the untenable assumption of George Bancroft that "American independence, like the great rivers of the country, had many sources, but the headspring which colored all the stream was the Navigation Act" (p. 31). A combination of negative statement and evidence consumes half of the book. The reader is supposed to be well convinced that the acts of trade during the century of "salutary neglect" had little to do with the Revolution. Their extension, after the French and Indian War, to include fiscal control, is at this point emphasized as the real reason for war. David

Ramsay and Mercy Warren, among the earliest historians of the struggle, are cited as more representative observers than the later historians.

The second section, introduced by a trenchant statement from the Old Testament, swings the scholarly batteries around on George III: "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (p. 161). The author's undoubted scholarship and mature thinking make it possible for him to expand his "text," without appearing ludicrous, to include an analogy with World War II on the same page. Such scope and understanding of organizational problems form the strength of Professor Dickerson's presentation.

From blaming the king to indictment of the ministry is a short step. One is reminded of Hugh Egerton's *Causes and Character of the American Revolution*. George Grenville remains as the *bête noir* of imperial reorganization, and Lord North is still the creature of a bungling monarch. Ministerial ineptitude is broadened to include the venal character of minor placemen. "Customs Racketeering" and dishonesty among the servants of empire are major factors in divorcing the colonies from their mother.

The conclusion seems to be that some Americans knew that trade regulation was good for them, and that many Englishmen felt that the tradition of enumeration was sufficient to justify taxation as part of trade regulation in a broad sense. Mutual suspicion grew up from causes other than the acts of trade—precisely what is not shown.

Many questions remain unanswered. Why, for example, did only thirteen of the British colonies rally to the cry, "no taxation without representation?" Why did Daniel Dulany so hate the Stamp Act in 1765, and yet become a Loyalist in 1776? Perhaps the author has confused loyalty to the empire during the French and Indian War with loyalty to American institutions. Perhaps middle class growth during the 18th century had something to do with the Revolution.

JAMES HIGH

*University of Washington*

*Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts.* By JOHN C. MILLER.  
Boston: Little, Brown, 1951. 253 pp. \$3.50.

In the summer of 1798 the Federalist congressional majority, designing to perpetuate its control of the government and to impress upon the nation its own social and economic image, enacted the Alien and Sedition Laws. The hysteria generated by the undeclared naval war with France and the fear that the equalitarian principles of the French Revolution might spread to America had induced a climate of opinion receptive to their passage. Yet only one of the acts was a temporary war measure. The others were directed at the elimination of those aliens, Irish more than French, who tended to join the anti-Federalists and to disseminate socio-economic doctrines inimical to the interests of privilege. Thus the Alien Act empowered the President to deport virtually any alien in the country, while

the Sedition Act made much ordinary criticism of the government a crime. As enforced, few aliens were actually compelled to leave; but several Jeffersonian editors were suppressed, two important political figures convicted, and a handful of insignificant citizens punished, one for expressing the hope that a whiff of grapeshot might strike President John Adams in the seat of his pants. To obtain these convictions, Federalist judges corrupted the law, packed juries, and generally compromised judicial procedures.

Professor Miller has related the story of these troublous times in skillful narrative style. His scholarship, however, is not equal to his literary craftsmanship. For instance, there is no analysis of the vote in Congress on party lines; the *Annals of Congress* are merely culled; and several indictments are missed. Also, the exoneration of Alexander Hamilton of sympathy with the Federalist program rests on a careless interpretation of his position, for Hamilton's real view was that "the masses [of immigrants] ought to be removed from the country." Whatever its current value—it was recently cited in a Supreme Court decision—*Crisis in Freedom* is an inadequate historical study of a continuing constitutional problem.

WILLIAM H. HARBAUGH

Northwestern University

*The Era of Good Feelings.* By GEORGE DANGERFIELD. New York: Harcourt, Brace, [1952]. xiv, 525 pp. \$6.

This book is neither a general history of the United States from the War of 1812 to the election of Jackson nor a limited study of American-British relations in this period, but it is something of both. By the author's definition, it "is essentially a description of some of the personalities and experiences, American and European, which assisted in or were necessary to the political transition from Jeffersonian democracy to Jacksonian democracy." "European" here usually means British, and the work is at its best in portraying the effect of the rising power of British industrialism on the relations between Britain and the United States. Sometimes, however, the author, whose previous writings have been on British history, seems to be lured from his theme by his knowledge of English men and measures.

The first fifth of the book is devoted to the peacemaking activities which culminated in the Treaty of Ghent. This tale is told against a background of British continental diplomacy, the major events of the American war being presented incidentally. After the peace the reader is conducted from the early Monroe administration, where the Florida problem is emphasized, through the Missouri debates and the commercial negotiations with Britain, especially those regarding the West Indies and Latin-America, to the political turmoil of the Adams administration.

A wide use is made of published sources, British and American, but



manuscripts were apparently consulted only in New York state, except for two collections in the Library of Congress. A wise consultation and application of secondary materials is evident. The writing is good; the phrasing is often very clever—as when Thomas Cooper is described as “something between a calendar and a chameleon, a curious register of temporary fads and local prejudices” (p. 403), and Van Buren as a “plump and smiling Cassius,” seeking Adams’ destruction (p. 360). The inappropriateness of the title as applied to the period discussed is recognized by the author.

The work is generally sound, and the conclusions shrewd, though Dangerfield’s view of the admission of Missouri as a surrender to slavery seems to be adopted without recognition of the fact that Missouri, once admitted, could make her own decisions regarding slavery. His opinion that in the War of 1812 “British military preponderance was bound sooner or later to bear down all opposition” might find dissent.

Clever, informed, and attractive, this book is, but it is probably too detailed and too closely reasoned for the general reader, while it does not claim to be a definitive treatise for the scholar. The reviewer hopes it will be widely read, nonetheless, because it is good history and interesting history.

JOHN A. MUNROE

*University of Delaware*

*Letters from America: 1773-1780.* Edited by ERIC ROBSON. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1951. xxvi, 90 pp. \$3.

Sir James Murray, the author of these twenty-four most interesting letters was not yet twenty-five years old when the American Revolution began. His letters, therefore, show much of the impatience, eagerness for action, love of home, and that highly critical attitude so often found in one so young. Yet his comments regarding the war and the British conduct of it, as well as his opinions of America and its armies, show a frankness and an objectivity which are both revealing and refreshing.

In these letters one sees the early confidence of the young officer in a quick British victory gradually become clouded by doubt and his severe criticism of bungling and mismanagement on the part of officers of higher rank than himself, and even of the Ministry itself. His contempt for the American soldiers, whom he refers to as “vermin,” is only exceeded by his distaste for America itself. He repeatedly expresses his longing to return to his native Scotland.

Only eleven of the twenty-four letters were written from within what is now the United States. Even so, the student of the Revolution will find all twenty-four of these letters to be both interesting and valuable. Little that is new will be found in these messages regarding the war itself but they make a most significant addition to the literature of the period.

Indeed, their chief value may lie in the fact that they give us a fresh opportunity to see the Revolution through the eyes of a British officer. Having been written to relatives the style is clear, intimately frank, highly personal, and delightfully free from the burdensome military language and technical details which officers of that day so often employed.

Carefully edited, the volume contains a most helpful introduction, a rich bibliography, an abundance of excellent footnotes, and an index substantially increasing the importance of the work.

EDWARD M. COLEMAN

*Morgan State College*

*Thomas Jefferson: Scientist.* By EDWIN T. MARTIN. New York: Henry Schuman, 1952. x, 289, pp. \$4.

The range of Jefferson's scientific interests knew few limits. His Enlightenment preconceptions led him into errors; they also opened new fields of inquiry, widened horizons for reason to explore, suggested ways for men to improve their earthly lot.

Mr. Martin's able work surveys Jefferson in his scientific adventures on two continents. Wisely, the author portrays the social and political *milieu* in which the sage of Monticello carried on his inventions and experiments. Jefferson the statesman found political enemies capitalizing on his heretical deism, his impious curiosity, his Gallican associates. But he persisted and as Mr. Martin states, "his greatness consisted in his insistence upon freedom of the scientific mind" (p. 244). Certainly, Jefferson's scientific achievements, with one exception (a plow moldboard), were gadgets rather than significant contributions. But when he encouraged greater scientists, exchanged information here and abroad, stimulated learning in almost every discipline—Jefferson the scientist paid dividends to his and future generations.

The author handled a difficult organization problem well. In his effort to achieve topical delineation, however, Mr. Martin repeats some items unnecessarily. We read in several places of the hair growth of Indians, of an attempt to extract fresh water from the sea, and of Jefferson's willingness to break the Embargo in the interests of science. This is a minor defect; more important is the concise picture here offered of Jefferson's scientific life. This book deserves a prominent place in the growing list of Jefferson studies.

HAROLD M. HYMAN

*Columbia University*

*In the Spirit of Jefferson.* Essays and Reviews by ERNEST L. TALBERT.  
New York: Exposition Press, 1951. 64 pp. \$2.

Let those be warned who expect from the title that they will learn something about Jefferson from this florilegium of rewritten book-reviews, which appeared originally in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the *Railway Clerk*, and *The Humanist*, I would guess largely in the first two. This thin volume records the author's approval of the political thought of Thomas Jefferson, William James, John Dewey, and George H. Mead and his sanction of the religion of Hosea, Buddha, Plato, Jesus, and St. Paul. About Kate Smith he has a few misgivings. Consult, if you please, the chapter "Kate Smith and Jeffersonian Democracy." Like all his admired prophets, the author speaks out fearlessly in favor of love in his opening chapter on the dichotomy of love and hate. In regard to more specific matters he is less forthright. He presents large capitalists, for example, in their Jekyll-Hyde role of philanthropists and robber barons, but does not decide which interpretation accords with Jeffersonian philosophy.

The author may have an understanding of "the spirit of Jefferson," but he carefully conceals it in this volume. In a panegyric of John Dewey, for example, the only concrete explanation given of the philosopher's eminence is his investigation in Mexico of the case of Leon Trotsky, which is said to have been for Dewey "an opportunity to demonstrate what Jefferson democracy and the liberal philosophy mean." If the reader feels that the relationship between the case of Trotsky and Jeffersonian democracy is somewhat less than implicit, nothing in this volume will help him see the connection.

It may seem captious to expect philosophical depth and critical acuteness in a heterogeneous collection of reviews such as this, but it is the author's fault for dignifying trivia with a grandiose title.

A. O. ALDRIDGE

*University of Maryland*

*Randolph of Roanoke: A Study in Conservative Thought.* By RUSSELL KIRK. Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951. vii, 187 pp. \$3.

There has developed a new and far from happy tendency of historians to exaggerate the political comments of American statesmen into political theory and philosophy. Adrienne Koch unwittingly led the way with her *Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson*, and was followed by George Lipsky's *John Quincy Adams: His Theory and Ideas*, and now by Russell Kirk's *Randolph of Roanoke*. All these studies read rather like doctoral dissertations, and only Miss Koch supplied anything new in her study of Jefferson's philosophical reading.

Russell Kirk makes claim to neither a fresh approach nor a new understanding regarding that bewildering political personality, John Randolph,

but is content to supply "an account of the mind of a radical man who became the most eloquent of American conservatives." This account takes the form of a series of awkwardly divided sections dealing with Randolph's ideas on such subjects as "The Division of Power" and "The Cancer." This latter chapter on slavery makes illuminating reading, but its weakness is that of the book itself: Randolph's ideas lose too much of their significance when out of their political context, and Mr. Kirk's rather artificial compartmentalization makes for unhappy and confusing repetition. Not until the final summation does the author reveal his considerable writing ability in what is an excellent synthesis of the eccentric Randolph.

A sectionalist who feared sectionalism, a pessimistic Jeffersonian who hated Jefferson, a secessionist who opposed nullification, Randolph poses difficult questions for the student of his political ideas. Despite thorough research and impressive scholarship, Mr. Kirk does not present a cohesive account of Randolph's thought, and the present reviewer suspects there are two good reasons: First, Randolph is hardly worthy of a volume devoted so exclusively to his political ideas, and bears poor comparison with an Edmund Burke; and, second, it is doubtful whether the most enamoured student of Randolph can render that medical phenomenon completely intelligible.

H. TREVOR COLBOURN

*The Johns Hopkins University*

*Chivers' Life of Poe.* Edited by RICHARD BEALE DAVIS. New York: Dutton, 1952. 127 pp. \$5.

During the 1850s two out-of-the-ordinary men, one on either side of the Atlantic, were writing revealingly about Edgar Poe. One was the French poet, Charles Baudelaire, whose critical papers on the American author were edited and translated a few months ago by Lois and Francis Hyslop. The other was the Georgia poet, Thomas Holley Chivers (1807-1858), whose manuscript biography of Poe, together with related pieces, all covering the years about 1851-1857, have now been impeccably assembled by Professor Davis of the University of Tennessee.

Though Chivers' connection with Poe is primarily associated with his charges of plagiarism, the publication of this new "life"—fragmentary and factually inaccurate though it be—demonstrates that the Georgia physician's real importance lies in his close acquaintance with and his comments on his famous friend. The two had corresponded as early as 1840, but had not met until the summer of 1845, only four years before Poe's death. Hence Chivers' is no more than a partial view of an enigmatic subject. But it is a gratifyingly objective view because the Doctor, despite his charges of plagiarism (which barely enter here), believed that the author of *The Raven* "possessed a higher genius than Plato,—a loftier talent than Pythagoras." Such fairness adds weight to the value of the "life" as commentary, and editor Davis may well be correct in maintaining that Chivers "came as close as any of [Poe's] contemporaries to understanding him."

Running to 78 pages of text, the Life's most useful portions—certainly its most vivid—are those headed "Conversations" and "Personal Appearance." It is absorbing to watch a contemporary observer in the unwitting act of creating a Poe Legend: "I would say that he was the Incarnation of the Greek Prometheus"; "If any *man* ever held seven devils in him—(or even fourteen—) that man was Edgar A. Poe." But Chivers has left behind him a reputation for guilelessness; and his descriptions, for example, of Poe's controversial encounter on Broadway with Lewis Gaylord Clark, have the clear ring of truth. As to our biographer's writing style, well, Poe himself called Chivers "at the same time one of the best and one of the worst poets in America"; and his prose resoundingly proves that the physician was suffering from an advanced case of elephantiasis of the rhetoric.

But what we have here is first-hand commentary about a major American author. For the first time this commentary has been fully and scrupulously presented in print, and its publishers have given it a handsome garb with which to face the world. For any Poe enthusiast, therefore, as well as for all students of Southern literature, the volume is well worth the price.

CURTIS CARROLL DAVIS

*Lieutenant Emory Reports.* Introduction and Notes by ROSS CALVIN.

Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1951. 208 pp. \$4.50.

In the summer of 1846 Lt. William Hemsley Emory of the Topographical Engineers was ordered to survey the Southwest to determine whether it was worth conquering and annexing to the United States. Completing his survey, he published *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance* (*sic*) which became the handbook for more than one California-bound emigrant and a gold mine of first-hand information for the scholar. The present edition with introduction and notes by Ross Calvin marks the first time this famous Western classic has appeared in one hundred years.

Emory, a native of Poplar Grove, Queen Anne's County, contributed a valuable account of the Southwest. He proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the region was desirable. Even today, his report is of significance because many of the landmarks which he described can be seen from the highway. More important, however, his work was concrete evidence that the Army did play a major role in the extension of the frontier and the opening up of new territory.

Calvin changed Emory's work only slightly. He added explanatory footnotes where he thought them necessary while he omitted obsolete scientific data. Both the editor and the publishers are to be complimented on making the *Notes* once more available. The volume lacks an index, but this detracts but little from the appearance of a volume which should serve as a stimulus for the publication of more out-of-print source materials.

FRANK F. WHITE, JR.

*Library of Congress*

*Memoirs of a Monticello Slave, As Dictated to Charles Campbell in the 1840's by Isaac, one of Thomas Jefferson's Slaves.* Edited by RAYFORD W. LOGAN. Charlottesville: Tracy W. McGregor Library, 1951. 45 pp. \$3.

"Travelling in the phaeton Mr Jefferson used oftentimes to take the reins himself & drive. Whenever he wanted to travel fast *he'd* drive. . . ." "Mr Jefferson bowed to everybody he meet: talked wid his arms folded. . . ." ". . . old master wouldn't shoot partridges settin: said 'he wouldn't take advantage of em'. . . ." "Mr Jefferson always singing when ridin or walkin: hardly ever see him anywhar out doors but what he was a-singin. . . ." ". . . nary man in this town walked so straight. . . ."

Most of the people who remembered Thomas Jefferson left us less illuminating comments than these of his colored servant Isaac, which appear in print now for the first time, admirably edited, indexed, and introduced.

Taking notes for my own use, I copied nearly the whole thing. For Isaac Jefferson remembered not just the great man he served and his visitors at Monticello. He remembered Yorktown, and before that the day the British under Arnold took Richmond—"seemed like the day of judgment was come." His account of Jefferson's controversial flight and his own capture by the soldiers, vivid and well told and convincingly remembered, makes an excellent footnote to the war. But then the whole too-short book is interesting; you will enjoy every word.

ELLEN HART SMITH

*The Health of Slaves on Southern Plantations.* By WILLIAM D. POSTELL. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1951. xiv, 231 pp. \$3.

In this study, Mr. Postell has set forth to investigate the methods adopted by southern planters to conserve the health of their slaves. Although restricted to the period from about 1800 to the Civil War, this little volume presents not only valuable discussions of southern medicinal, surgical, and sanitary practices, but also of the foods, clothing, and housing apportioned to slaves. These sections are amply supported by detailed documentation and thirteen illustrations and statistical tables.

Unfortunately, the author did not elect to confine himself to a study of the measures used to protect the health of the slaves. On several occasions Mr. Postell felt the necessity of defending the plantation system of the ante-bellum South by comparing its virtues with those of the northern factory system. These apologies reveal little of the scholarly attitude and detract from the distinct contributions to historical knowledge contained in the rest of the book. Aside from its obvious merits and demerits, this monograph serves to remind us that it is high time historians and teachers of history gave rightful attention to the importance of the state of public health in the historical development of the United States.

DONALD R. MCCOY

*The National Archives*



*Elias E. Ries, Inventor.* By ESTELLE H. RIES. New York: Philosophical Library, 1951. xii, 369 pp. \$4.75.

To write the story of an unappreciated genius, particularly if that genius is one's own father, can be no easy task. Miss Ries has managed, without sinking into maudlin pathos, to give a readable account of such a man. Born in Germany, reared in Baltimore, struggling in New York to make a living for his family, Elias Ries, with a mind constantly at work on new ideas, was a man ahead of his time—one who would, perhaps, have been ahead of his time in any age. Although the average reader is not qualified to evaluate the work of this man, one can well believe that his contributions to knowledge were of lasting importance. The style of the book is given a somewhat disturbing unevenness by a mixture of objective and personal narrative and by the interspersing of quotations and bits of news to set the scene and show the passing times. More than a monument to one man, *Elias E. Ries, Inventor* is a plea for like men, for more understanding, better patent law practices, material aid. If even one inventor is benefited by the arguments presented in this book, it will have served its purpose.

CATHERINE M. SHELLEY

*The Mudd Family of the United States.* By RICHARD D. MUDD. Ann Arbor: Edward Brothers, 1951. xiv, 1461 pp. \$15.

This genealogy deals primarily with the descendants in the male line of Thomas Mudd, gentleman, who settled in Charles County by 1677. Judging from extant census schedules, the heads of families by 1790 had increased to 24, all Maryland residents. The genealogy, one of the largest of its type ever published, owes its size to the fact that it contains much minute information from original and family sources about each generation. It includes a detailed biographical account of the grandfather of the compiler, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, who was imprisoned but later pardoned for his alleged complicity in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. It is a carefully documented work of many years research and a genealogical contribution of lasting value.

The reviewer believes that the system of identifying male descendants that results in such a symbol as ABACA ABAA and the consequent arrangement of data so that each son of the colonist, and the son's descendants are treated as a group, has serious obstacles to the user. He prefers the system so generally used in our standard periodicals where the male descendants are assigned numbers in chronological sequence and the descendants of each generation are treated as a group.

MEREDITH B. COLKET, JR.

*The National Archives*

*The Chandlee Family from 1591.* Compiled by THOMAS CHANDLEE and WALTER BLACKSON. Wilmington: Walter Blackson, Delaware Trust Bldg., 1951. 734 pp.

This work is no "fly-by-night" affair; it represents a great amount of research, first by Thomas Chandlee of Ballitore, Ireland, up to 1898, and later by Walter Blackson who has put in about 50 years of effort. A large number of assistants, connected with the family, assisted Mr. Blackson. The Chandlee connections are widespread—Abrams, Astles, Canns, Caskeys, Darlington, Ergoods, Gallahers, Leadbetters, and Naylor, to speak of no others. Indexed by what the reviewer may call "the Blackson system" (whereby descendant numbers, instead of page numbers, guide the reader), this volume is very easy to use as a reference. But parts are very easy reading, notably the essay-type additions to family listings, such as "Nottingham Lots" (valuable to all searchers of Cecil County records).

More illustrations might have helped the work, though there is a map and one notices, unusual in a genealogical work, no family chart or tree. Less excusable is the nature of the references: "from William Chandlee's shorthand notes," "Mrs. Charles F. Fox says . . .," "Supplied by. . . ." Maryland records were never consulted apparently, either at the Maryland Historical Society or at the Hall of Records. Pennsylvania official records are never cited. In praise it may be said that frequent reference is made to newspapers, E. E. Chandlee's *Six Quaker Clockmakers*, Bible entries, and religious records of one sort or another.

ROGER THOMAS

*Hall of Records, Annapolis*

*The Pennocks of Primitive Hall.* By GEORGE VALENTINE MASSEY II. West Chester: Chester County Historical Society, 1951. viii, 139 pp. \$10.

*The Pennocks of Primitive Hall*, by George Valentine Massey II, is a delight for those who seek genealogical truth and documentation. The compiler has traced Christopher Pennock and his descendants through the colonial period and, in some branches, into post-revolutionary days. Pennock, one-time shop keeper of Cork, Ireland, who came to Philadelphia about 1651, sprang from the British yeomanry, a class which furnished the backbone of Quakerism, and in Pennsylvania followed out the occupation of "cardmaker." Of his three sons, only one Joseph left any progeny in America to carry on the name. After his father's death, having lived in Ireland with his mother, he came to Pennsylvania to claim his inheritance and left a line of craftsmen such as hatters, joiners, brewers, house carpenters, and tradesmen, such arts and crafts which formed the nucleus of later Pennsylvania wealth and industry.

The work of the compiler was facilitated by the meticulous records of the Quakers and by extant family documents as well as a genealogical chart

compiled by a descendant in 1844-1846, showing generations beyond the Revolution from personal knowledge and contact with the oldest living descendants.

The Pennocks after reaching Pennsylvania were apparently not a migrating race, at least no lines of migrations are shown, and no attempt was made by the compiler to connect those bearing the name in other parts of the State with the clan around Philadelphia. Some wills are printed in their entirety and many quotations from deeds and other instruments are given. The book is copiously documented, indexed, and presented in a clear, direct, and easy style.

HARRY WRIGHT NEWMAN

*Early American Gunsmiths, 1650-1850.* By HENRY J. KAUFFMAN. Harrisburg: Stackpole, 1952. xx, 94 pp. \$5.

Fascinating and invaluable for the gun collector and historian is the information brought together by Henry Kauffman in his *Early American Gunsmiths*. Here for the first time is a reliable assembly of facts, dates, and locations of American gunsmiths, with every source clearly noted and no spurious names or hearsay included.

The author has traced each gunsmith's name in wills, advertisements, and record books to a specific location at a specific date. The references often tell, in addition, if the smith was a freeman, indentured servant, or slave, what other business he carried on, or to whom he was apprenticed.

Tracing a man to a single document, however, can be misleading, for a single date may be at the beginning or end of a forty year career and hence not completely reliable as a guide. The book covers rural Pennsylvania with care and includes documentation of gunsmiths from Maine to Carolina and the West, but there are vast areas still to be explored and further investigations needed of the existing names.

RICHARD H. RANDALL, JR.

*Alcoa, An American Enterprise.* By CHARLES C. CARR. New York: Rinehart, 1952. ix, 292 pp. \$3.50.

Students of business history will be grateful to Mr. Carr for the clarity with which he tells the complex story of the Aluminum Company of America from its inception in 1888 until the mid-20th century. The story began with the discovery in 1886 by Charles M. Hall of a cheap method of separating metallic aluminum from its compounds. Two years later the invention had the financial support of Pittsburgh metallurgists who built a \$20,000 pilot plant to test its commercial possibilities. In 1889 this

"seed money" was increased to \$1,000,000 and a daily output of fifty pounds achieved with difficulty. From these relatively humble beginnings Alcoa expanded until its capital amounted to hundreds of millions and its "integrated" operations, from the mining and refining of ore to the manufacture of both mill and consumer products, were done by numerous subsidiaries in both the United States and abroad. One of the most thoroughly investigated companies in America, Alcoa emerged from charges brought in 1912, 1922, and 1937 under the Sherman Act with an almost entirely clean bill of health.

Had Mr. Carr, Alcoa's director of public relations for fifteen years, taken his readers to the seat of managerial decisions in the Board room, and also explained the relationships between the parent and subsidiary companies, students would have reason for even more gratitude to him. His book is a "company history" which in no way discredits Alcoa. Yet it would have been extremely difficult for him to have presented evidence unfavorable to the company, if such evidence exists, so long as it is possible that the Justice Department, which uses past behavior to show the continuing nature of policy, will fail to place that behavior in its proper context of contemporary business conditions and social philosophy.

STUART BRUCHEY

*Homes and Gardens in Old Virginia.* Revised Edition. Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1950. xvi, 544 pp. \$7.50.

Here is a book that should be on the shelves of every library whose owner loves fine old homes and gardens. There are illustrations and brief accounts of nearly 200 houses and other buildings in this book on the Old Dominion. Unlike the earlier edition, which was intended primarily as a guide book, the present volume has been written as a book of reference. It falls somewhat short of being the research volume many will hope for, however. The descriptions and histories are short and undocumented, there are no floor plans, and the lack of county or regional maps to accompany appropriate chapters hampers its usefulness. If the volume does not quite measure up to the standards strived for in the "historic house" articles in this journal, it is nonetheless a welcome addition to the materials on the subject now available.

*A Short History and Bibliography of Ossining Newspapers 1797-1951.* By VIRGINIA LARKIN REDWAY. Ossining, N. Y.: Privately Printed, 1951. 34 pp.

Just what its title implies, this pamphlet fills a niche in the history of Westchester County, New York. Mrs. Redway includes in this account something of the lives of the men connected with the several newspapers and their place in and influence on the community. A bibliography of all Ossining newspapers is appended.

*Records of the Accounting Department of the Office of Price Administration.* Compiled by M. H. FISHBEIN and E. C. BENNETT. *Records of the Bureau of Ordnance.* Compiled by W. F. SHONKWILER. *Records of the Solid Fuels Administration for War.* Compiled by E. F. MARTIN. (Preliminary Inventories Numbers 32, 33, 34.) Washington: National Archives, 1951. vii, 108; v, 33; v, 39 pp.

The "preliminary" inventory, of which 34 have now been issued, is the most detailed and useful tool the scholar can, and should normally, expect the National Archives to publish. (Special lists, such as the recent *List of Documents Relating to Special Agents of the Department of State, 1789-1906*, are occasionally issued.) The three inventories under review give evidence of the care and meticulous precision one anticipates in National Archives publications. Principal interest in the first and last probably is in the speed with which these records have been processed, made available, and described. The records of the Bureau of Ordnance (established in 1842) offer greater reward to most students of American history. One is struck by the apparent completeness and ready accessibility of the Bureau's files for more than a century.

#### OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

*Primitive Painters in America, 1750-1950.* By JEAN LIPMAN and ALICE WINCHESTER. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1950. 182 pp. (Passano Fund Purchase.)

*Town Meeting for America.* By WM. BROSS LLOYD, JR. New York: Island Press, 1951. 84 pp.

*Engineers of the Southwest Pacific, 1944-1945.* [Vols. I, II, VII, VIII.] Edited by GEORGE A. MEIDLING. [Washington: Government Printing Office.] 1947-50.

*Shells.* By HENRY LEE SMITH; edited by MARY F. GOODWIN. Baltimore: 1951. 76 pp.

*Practical Book of American Silver.* By EDWARD WENHAM. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1949. 275 pp. (Passano Fund Purchase.)

## NOTES AND QUERIES

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### UNKNOWN MARYLAND: THE POTOMAC VALLEY

By FREDERICK GUTHEIM <sup>1</sup>

That part of Maryland which lies within the drainage basin of the Potomac River is not a very large part of Maryland. Yet it is an important part, and it is less well known than the geographically larger part of the State that lies below the falls of the rivers, the part of our state that was settled earlier, which saw the great prosperity that came with the cultivation of tobacco, and has been the face of Maryland as a century of historians (and romancers) have shown it to the world. The picture of Maryland that is painted in films, popular novels, and short stories is invariably a picture of Tidewater Maryland. Our splendid colonial days, our prosperous plantations, the social graces and culinary triumphs to which they gave birth—these must now make way for a broader scheme of things.

I shall try to indicate, in a general way, some of the reasons why the western part of the state should be of interest to those who live in the eastern part, why what happens in the rural sections and the small towns affects the life of our metropolis. But what is there in the Potomac, and especially the Piedmont Potomac, that meets these standards?

Let us begin with the historical aspects of the question. It is quite impossible to understand the dynamic forces behind the settlement beyond the tidewater region in the 17th century if we do not understand the compulsion of the search for minerals, the search for a passage to the Indies, which led to the exploration of the upper valleys. Even the economy with its more diversified trade with the Indians in the Potomac, as in many of the other eastward flowing rivers, saw its greatest activity above the falls.

The 18th century was the golden age of the plantation, but even here we can see that in large part it was the trade in western lands that paid the bills of many a plantation and postponed the day of reckoning. If we do not understand the West in Maryland we shall fail to understand the forces that propelled our State to rebellion. And if we do not understand the agricultural development of the Monocacy and Cumberland valleys, we shall be unable to understand the phenomenal growth of the city of Baltimore that caused its population to more than double in the period between

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<sup>1</sup> This contribution is based on notes of an address made at a meeting of the Maryland Historical Society in January, 1950.



1775 and 1800. The city grew as the hinterland of our Chesapeake Bay port city developed.

The population of Baltimore was recruited in no small part from the upland countryside, and these people brought with them the culture they had inherited or acquired in Western Maryland. The unique quality of that culture was the impact of the "wheat people" from Pennsylvania upon the "corn people" from Tidewater, and the patterns that resulted from this conflict.

Our State can take particular pride in the development of the wheat civilization of the upper Potomac, for it was there, more than any other place, that the prototype of our characteristic national agriculture in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys was formed. The wheat technology, if one may call it that, included the seed, the method of planting, cultivating, and harvesting, the tools and machinery that were appropriate to that work, the milling of wheat into flour, and even the design of sacks and barrels in which it was taken to market. The rapid development of that "Mesopotamia of the United States"—the wheat growing states of the Middle West—was based upon the earlier achievement on a smaller scale in the upper Potomac, from which most of the grain exported to Europe came for a half century. Here is a contribution indeed.

Although the Potomac above Tidewater occupies but a small part of Maryland, it is an integral part of the State, and useful particularly as it gives diversity and variety to what would otherwise be homogeneous to the point of monotony. It is like a farmer's woodlot, or his home lot, and like these, usefulness is enhanced by its relationship to the whole.

I do not urge upon you an empty-headed pride in Western Maryland, but I hope that a lack of balance that has long characterised historical writing in our State will be rectified. I should like to see our Society devote more attention to Western Maryland, and more to the 19th century, especially the later years of the 19th century. We might remind ourselves that the 20th century is half gone, and ask when history begins anyhow. The scope of our concerns with local history should be widened continually to reflect the broadening effect of modern knowledge, and in order that history may make its best contribution to the diversified interests of our people, to practical affairs, and to citizenship.

A great amount of work has been done in assembling the documents, the records, the objects and the memorabilia of the past, and preserving them for scholarship. But I will be forgiven for saying that we are still working upon too narrow a base. We do not have, for example, a consistent record of a single wheat farmer in the State of Maryland that compares with the records we have for a score of tobacco planters of the 18th century. We have little to record the growth of folk cultures, particularly the anonymous culture of the Scotch Irish or the Pennsylvania Germans. We lack an adequate account of nearly all our characteristic early industries, particularly the iron works. It is impossible to trace from documents in the possession of our Society the rise of coal mining, the history of mine technology, the life of the miners, the successive waves

of immigrants, the development of unionism and the consolidation of ownership, the complex interplay of mining and railroads, the gradual decline of the coal business to the point where Allegany County is a chronic depressed area, singled out by the Secretary of the Treasury as one of the few hard-core unemployment zones that require special remedial treatment by the government of the United States.

In pointing to such future opportunities, I hope you will not think that I am unaware of or dissatisfied with our past accomplishments. Everything I have said, indeed, should argue that these opportunities to study further our characteristic folk cultures, economic activities, and other aspects of the history of our state, especially in the Potomac Valley, are opportunities that have been unfolded but recently. But they exist today as the challenge we face, and I should be less than candid if I did not hold them up to you as opportunities.

Every part of our nation has its regional identity—except the middle Atlantic states. We share with Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York, membership in that group of states. It is becoming clearer, although it is still far from distinct, that the regional character of these states exists, however dimly it has been stated. Our task of assembling the records that alone will adequately reflect the whole of our state for the whole of its past history, in reflection of the broader knowledge of our times, may be made easier if we can work together with these other states whose development in so many ways has corresponded with our own.

Finally I would urge a greater popular support for historical activities than we have received. The growing interest in how our people lived is broadening a local history base once found largely in genealogy. A better understanding of folk culture is fundamental to these broader interests and this broader support, and it is here that the contributions of the Potomac valley will prove richest and of most value. I have tried to explore some of these, as they fell within the scope of my book,<sup>2</sup> but I cannot pretend to have done more than offer a few suggestions for other students.

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#### A TRIBUTE TO WESTERN MARYLAND

The State loyalties of Marylanders begin, understandably enough, in their own counties or regions. As a consequence those from the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, and Baltimore are not always so well informed and appreciative of other regions as they might be. The neglect of Western Maryland history, for example, is almost proverbial. This region, which by common consent consists of the six western counties of Garrett, Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Carroll, and Montgomery, has a recorded history of more than 200 years. Few would contend that this history is as rich as that of some other sections of the State, but it is a varied, significant, and important history.

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<sup>2</sup> Frederick Gutheim, *The Potomac* (New York: Rinehart, 1949). Reviewed in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XLV (March, 1950), 62-63.—EDITOR.

The present population of the area may be a matter of surprise: The six counties (less the suburban portions adjacent to the District of Columbia) have a population in excess of 350,000. Indeed there are a quarter of a million residents in the four westernmost counties alone. It is to the present residents of Western Maryland and their forbears that this issue of the *Maryland Historical Magazine* is dedicated.

From its inception, the *Magazine* has carried many articles of Western Maryland interest. For example, there was an essay on Washington County in 1907 (II, 347-354), a memoir of Richard Potts in 1910 (V, 63-68), the Taney-Van Buren correspondence in 1913 (VIII, 305-326), a note on the founder of Taneytown in 1916 (XI, 74-75), and articles on the Loyalist plot in Frederick (XL, 251-260) and Hagerstown in the Civil War (XL, 201-210) in 1945. Only a few citations are given here, and one concludes that county bibliographies or a Western Maryland bibliography from the *Magazine* would be impressive. Such articles will continue to appear in future issues.

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*Centennial of Western Maryland Railway*—Some extended notice of the 100th anniversary of the Western Maryland Railway would certainly be necessary in this issue of the *Magazine* were it not known that its history written by Harold Williams is to be published this summer. The most exciting days were surely those when Union troops and supplies were moved to Gettysburg before the crucial battle there. In November, 1863, a four-car special train carrying President Lincoln and party to that city travelled over tracks that became part of the Western Maryland. Less spectacular but quite as impressive is the story of the development of the railroad under men like John M. Hood to its present importance. As a review of Mr. Williams' book is to be published in a future issue, a further account is not necessary here.

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*Early Industrial Experiment in Maryland*—A copy of a thesis submitted to the University of Maryland by William McAlpine Richards, *An Experiment in Industrial Feudalism at Lonaconing, Maryland, 1837-1860* has been presented to the Maryland Historical Society. This thesis, completed in 1950, deals with an early mining company town in Allegany County. When the George's Creek Coal and Iron Company was granted a charter from the State of Maryland, it was given extensive authority to organize and supervise the community which was to house its workers, in addition to its authorization to carry on mining operations. Richards discusses the development of the industrial operations of the company, its controls over the community, its labor relations, and other related problems. Those interested in Western Maryland's industrial development and the relations of industry to society in the early 19th century should find Richard's study of interest.

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*Barbara Frietschie*—The Maryland Historical Society has recently acquired a scrapbook of newspaper clippings and letters pertaining to Barbara Frietschie which had been gathered by Lewis H. Steiner and Bernard C. Steiner. Ever since 1863 when Whittier's poem about Dame Barbara was published, a controversy has existed as to whether Whittier's eulogy of the nonagenarian Frederick heroine was based on fact or fiction. In the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXXVII (1942), 227-254, 400-413, Dorothy M. and William R. Quynn sifted the evidence surrounding the supposed incident, uncovered new information, and conclusively demonstrated that the flag incident as portrayed by Whittier could not have taken place. The Quynns did make clear, however, that such a story would not have been inconsistent with Dame Barbara's character or situation, and that there undoubtedly was same factual basis of demonstrated patriotism behind the legend Whittier eulogized.

In the controversy over the veracity of the Barbara Frietschie story, Dr. Lewis H. Steiner (1827-1892) was a principal witness. His father had looked after some business affairs for Barbara Frietschie, the doctor knew Barbara personally, he was in Frederick during the Confederate occupancy and had kept a journal which contained a reference to a flag incident. Steiner's position in the controversy was not unlike that of the Quynns in so far as he would not defend the literal accuracy of the Whittier poem, but insisted that it was not inconsistent with the spirit of the old lady. Dr. Steiner's son, Bernard (1867-1926), well known for his long service as Librarian of Enoch Pratt Free Library, and his many services to the Maryland Historical Society, continued his father's interest in the Frietschie incident and added further information to the scrapbook on Barbara as it appeared in the presses. Those who are interested in the Frederick heroine will find the Steiner scrapbook to be a useful collection on controversial writings on the subject.

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*Montgomery County*—A book, generously illustrated, about Montgomery County homes and history is to be published later this summer. The author is Mr. Roger B. Farquhar, vice-president of that county's historical society. A review will be carried in a future issue.

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*Mount Vernon Silver*—The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union has asked Mr. John Marshall Phillips, Director of the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts, to write its book on the original Mount Vernon silver. Considerable information already exists in the records of the Association, at Mount Vernon, relating to the Washington silver, but the story is not complete. This inquiry is directed to all who may have useful knowledge upon the subject. Anyone having such information is urged to communicate with me as soon as possible.

JOHN BEVERLEY RIGGS,  
Research Associate, Mount Vernon, Virginia.

*Ringgold Papers*—Information is requested concerning location of the personal papers of General Samuel Ringgold (1770-1829), of Fountain Rock, Washington County.

Prof. DIETER CUNZ,  
University of Maryland, College Park, Md.

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"*Macaroni*"—*Maryland Troops*?—Anyone who has specific information about the use of the term macaroni meaning "a body of Maryland soldiers in the Revolutionary War, wearing a gay uniform" is requested to communicate it to the Society for Prof. Giuseppe Prezzolini.

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*Jones, Thomas D.*—Information requested about present location and ownership of any sculpture (wood, bronze, or stone) by Jones (1812-1888).

ROBERT PRICE,  
Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio.

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*Orford*—Want name of Md. County where James A. Orford was living when his daughter Margaret was born, Sep. 9, 1787. Also his dates and any other information concerning this family. Margaret married (when? where?) William Roberts and is buried in Daviess Co., Ky.

Miss JEWELL ROBERTS,  
1518 Kingshighway, East St. Louis, Ill.

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*Ryan*—Information wanted of early Ryan Family of Anne Arundel Co., especially parentage of Sarah Ryan, m. Mar. 37, 1780, William Hayes believed to be the same who was a grocer at the old Fish Market, Baltimore (1802-1817), then ship-owner, d. Jan. 27, 1825, ca. 70 years. Have considerable data mostly before 1800 on Griffin and Hayes-Hays of Md.; would like to exchange.

R. G. SMITH,  
2904 13th St. South, Arlington, Va.

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*Sewall, James*—of "Holy Hall," Elkton was the son of Bazell (Basil) Sewell of Talbot Co. who died in 1802. James Sewall m. (about 1802) Ann Maria Rudolph and they had issue a son James M. and two daughters, Martha and Caroline. Martha m. — Glenn, and Caroline m. Thomas V. Oliver of Boston; both daughters had issue. In his will dated Jan. 5, 1842, James Sewall mentions nephews Robert Dawson, Basil Sewall, and Dr. Thomas R Sewall; also, a granddaughter, Rosa Glenn. Information is desired regarding the ancestry of (Gen.) James Sewall and his father Bazell Sewell. Would like to contact any of the descendants of the persons mentioned in this inquiry.

HARRY REIFSNYDER,  
5705 Elgin Avenue, Pittsburgh 6, Penna.

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*Smathers*—Free assistance to persons of surname Smathers (and Smither, Smether, etc.) desiring to verify or establish their family lines is offered by Ray K. Smathers, Historian, Smathers Family Memorial Collection, Haywood County Public Library, Waynesville, N. C.

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*Maryland Medical Institute*—During what years was the Maryland Medical Institute (Baltimore) in existence, and how much of that time was Dr. David Stewart, a founder in 1847, associated with it?

Reference Librarian,  
School of Pharmacy, Univ. of Maryland,  
Lombard and Greene Sts., Baltimore

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### CONTRIBUTORS

PROFESSOR CUNZ, of the University of Maryland, is the author of *The Maryland Germans* and numerous articles about the German settlers and their descendants. ☆ Author of a biography of Horatio Sharpe as his doctoral dissertation, MR. HIGH is now teaching at the University of Washington. ☆ A young attorney in Frederick, MR. MATHIAS recently read a paper on the Court Square at a meeting of the county historical society, of which he is secretary. ☆ MRS. W. A. PICKENS, a descendant of Col. Joshua Gist, incorporates much family tradition in her description of the old Gist home. ☆ MR. HOYT, a frequent contributor to scholarly journals and a former member of the staff of the Society, is well known to the readers of the *Magazine*.

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# Chart Your Course

Your Estate, like a ship, will reach its destination if you chart its course by making a Will which has been carefully planned.

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The problem was to find a return cargo. It was solved when Brazil began the growing of coffee on a considerable scale. Soon fleets of specially built "coffee clippers" were unloading full cargoes of coffee amid the forest of

masts that clustered about Fell's Point. The pleasant aroma of roasting coffee became the characteristic smell along the waterfront from 1825 to the turn of the century.

Coffee was literally money to many a lad starting out in the business. As the stevedores carried the coffee bags ashore, they were followed by boys with stencils and stencil pots who marked the bags in transit. After the day's work their pay was all the spilled coffee beans they were able to sweep up off the pier!

*The great era of the "coffee trade" had reached its height when The Fidelity was founded more than half a century ago. In the intervening years The Fidelity has become one of Baltimore's great banks, with complete banking and trust facilities for every business or personal need. Our main office and twelve other convenient offices welcome the opportunity to be of service.*

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